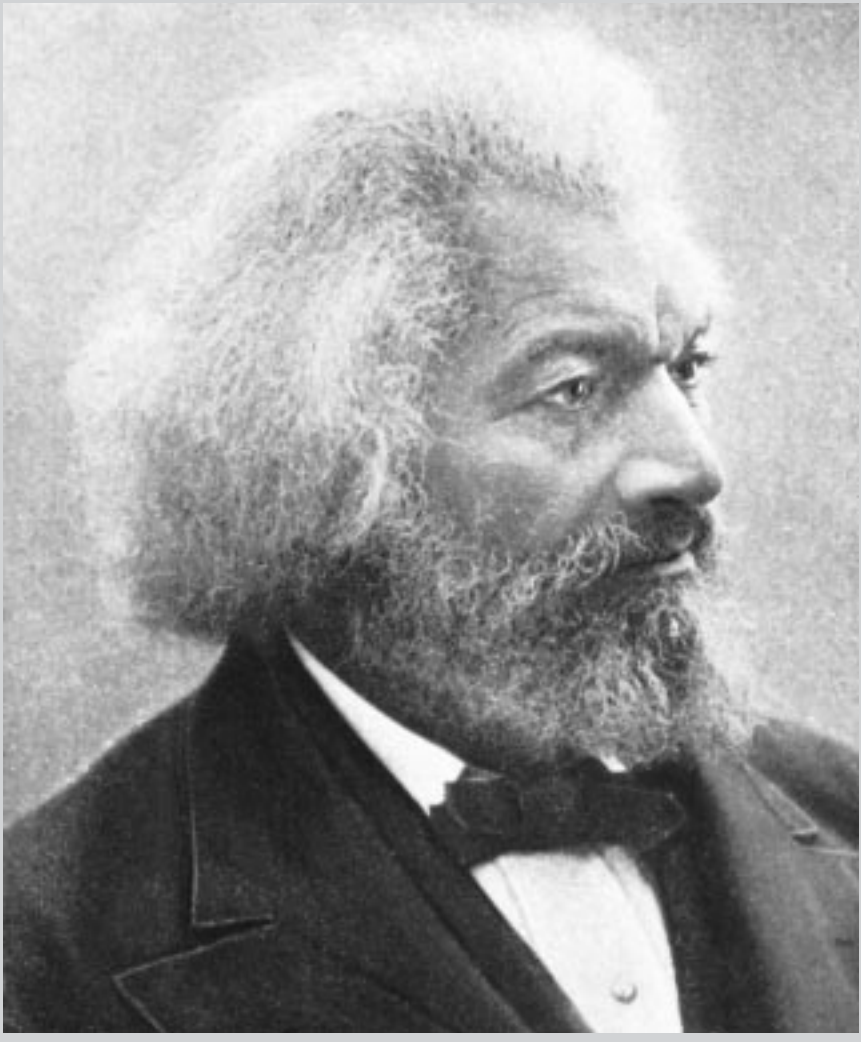
Part III

UP FROM SLAVERY



Frederick Douglass. (Library of Congress)

Chapter Six

Full of Faith, Full of Hope: African-American Experience from Emancipation to Segregation

Armstead L. Robinson

Slavery died during the American Civil War and its wartime demise precipitated the collapse of the quest for Confederate national independence. During the decades immediately following the compensated destruction of Afro-American chattel slavery, conflict inevitably erupted as members of the Freedom Generation (the former slaves and their descendants) struggled to realize their fond hopes for economic, political, and social equality within a reunified United States of America. This prolonged, bitter and frustrating struggle for democratic idealism and socio-economic equality framed Afro-American experience during the first half century of freedom.

Intense contestation over the meaning of freedom occurred both inside and outside the American South. The Reconstruction period, 1865 to 1877, saw two issues (the questions of how to rebuild the shattered Union and of how to accommodate black freedom) dominate national politics. The policy that emerged based the readmission of former Confederate States on four Reconstruction Acts and three constitutional amendments. The four Acts established procedures for readmission. The amendments declared chattel slavery illegal (13th); made the former slaves "citizens of the United States" entitled to "equal protection of the laws" (14th); and promised to protect black voting rights (15th). Angry southern whites resorted to organized political violence to block full implementation of these policies. Reconstruction collapsed due to the inability to sustain a national consensus in behalf of the use of military force to reconstruct Southern polity and economy on the basis of multi-racial democratic idealism.

Amid this fierce struggle, the Freedom Generation managed to fashion a postslavery culture which rested on family, self-reliance, and the church. By 1915, the Freedom Generation had reknit family units scattered by slavery; it had closed the literacy gap inherited from slavery; and, it had acquired more than 18 million acres of farm land. Along the way, the Freedom Generation had also erected a full panoply of religious, educational, cultural and social institutions. However, these successes at community building did not prevent the members of the Freedom Generation from falling victim to the "Jim Crow" system of racial segregation. State legislatures created this system of cradle-to-grave segregation during the period beginning in 1881. In 1896, the Supreme Court ruled, in *Plessy* v. *Ferguson*, that Jim Crow laws conformed to the Constitution so long as the states promised to provide what they quickly failed to deliver: "separate but equal" services in racially segregated facilities.

The subjugation of the Freedom Generation to domination by *de jure* segregation shows that post-Civil War America did not achieve the hoped-for transition to racial democracy. This failure led, in the 20th century, to the massive out-migration of Afro-Americans from

the former slaveholding states to urban regions throughout the United States. A second legacy of failed racial democracy, "Jim Crow" laws, precipitated the Civil Rights movement. And the contemporary "urban crisis" grew out of the racial discrimination experienced by so many Afro-American urban emigrants. These resonances of the emancipation experience reveal that America has yet to honor fully the compact the Great Emancipator, Abraham Lincoln, made solemnly at Gettysburg: the sacred pledge that saving the Union by the destruction of chattel slavery would promote "A New Birth Freedom" in a unified America.

I

In the aftermath of Emancipation, Americans, black as well as white, North as well as South, began to grapple with an issue that had been deferred by chattel slavery; what place should freed blacks occupy in American society? AME Bishop Daniel Payne took up this issue during the Civil War in a sermon delivered in Washington D.C., which he titled, "Welcome to the Ransomed." Payne looked beyond the military struggle between North and South as he urged newly freed blacks to adopt the Protestant religious values of the AME Church:

> Enter the great family of Holy Freedom not to lounge in sinful indolence, not to degrade yourselves by vice, nor to corrupt society by licentiousness…but to the enjoyment of a well-regulated liberty.

In its missionary activities in the South during and after the Civil War, the AME church urged the freedpeople toward self-reliance to be achieved through religion, education, hard work, and the acquisition of property. Black missionaries and black churches reiterated Bishop Payne's message to the freedpeople; the Freedom Generation had to turn its energies toward the work of community building essential to "the enjoyment of a well-regulated liberty."

So crucial were these issues for defining the contours of the economy, society, and polity of the postwar South that some Southern whites expressed concern about the implications of black freedom even before the Civil War ended. About three months prior to surrendering, Confederate General-in-Chief Robert E. Lee had endorsed a proposal to arm Confederate slaves as a last ditch measure to avert defeat. Lee gave his full blessing to a revolutionary concept which required granting freedom to slaves who served loyally. In his rationale for departing so radically from antebellum racialist ideology, Lee articulated clearly the central concern motivating white Southerners in the aftermath of slavery:

> If it end in subverting slavery it will be accomplished by ourselves, and we can devise the means of alleviating the evil consequences to both races. I think, therefore, we must decide whether slavery shall be extinguished by our enemies and the slaves be used against us, or [we] use them ourselves at the risk of the effects which may be produced upon our social institutions.

The contest between white and black southerners for control over the contours of post-slavery race relations became the framing issue for the next half century of Afro-American experience.

The North found cause to debate as well the contours of race relations in post-Civil War America. Although Lincoln eventually abandoned repatriation, he did so only after experiments in Haiti and in Central America ended in total failure. Lincoln could not find sufficient numbers of blacks willing to participate in these experiments. And, the blacks who went experienced hardships which persuaded them that their destiny lay in the United States.

The debate over the means of providing for the welfare of former slaves continued throughout the Civil War. After many false starts, Congress and Lincoln agreed, in February 1865, to establish a federal general welfare agency, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, to supervise social reconstruction in former slaveholding states. Congress gave the Bureau responsibility for both Refugees (white southern loyalists) and Freedmen (black former slaves). Congress provided the Bureau with some 10 million acres of abandoned southern farm land to be seized for non-payment of Union war taxes. The Bureau was charged to devise an equitable method for redistribution of this land in 40-acre plots to whites and blacks whose loyalty made them eligible for postwar federal aid.

We do not know how the implementation of this plan might have altered the contours of post-Civil War American society. We do know that the assassination of Lincoln brought the southern-born former slaveholding unionist and wartime Vice President Andrew Johnson to the Presidency. Once in office, Johnson blocked implementation of the Bureau plan by granting thousands of presidential pardons to the former slaveholders about to lose land due to tax defaults. Because the American Constitution gives the President irreversible pardoning power, Congress could do nothing to revive a Bureau plan which would have provided access to land for one-third of former slave families.

It turns out that by 1910, self-reliance had enabled freedpeople to acquire almost twice as much land as the Bureau plan would have made available. But in the immediate postwar period, the absence of ready access to "free" land meant that most former slaves had no choice. Circumstance compelled them to seek waged labor positions on land owned by whites, many of whom were bitter former slaveholders still enraged over the defeat of the Confederacy and impoverished by the failure of their crusade for national independence.

The stillbirth of postwar land reform did not occur without strong protest from those most directly affected: the freed people. The awkward task of explaining the disappearance of land set aside by Congress for redistribution fell to officials of the Bureau who chose not to implicate President Johnson. Bureau officers instead tried to persuade crowds of enraged and frustrated freedpeople that it was the blacks who had misunderstood congressional intent. In the Georgia and South Carolina Sea Islands, blacks who had received land during Sherman's 1864-65 March to the sea put up such stout resistance that Bureau officers called on the Union army to assist in returning possession of the land to former slaveholders.

Virtually every time Bureau officers explained the collapse of post-slavery land reform, they encountered enraged freedpeople. An angry speech delivered at Yorktown, Virginia, in the autumn of 1866 suggests how vigorously many former slaves reacted to news that they would not receive promised land. A freedman named Bayley Wyatt responded with eloquent rage and with great acuity when informed of two jolting changes in federal policy toward land reform. Not only would there to be no general redistribution to freedpeople, but even the small parcels on which a few thousand lucky blacks had lived provisionally were to be turned back to their former masters. Wyatt invoked the hard days in slavery when, "We made bricks without straw under old Pharo." When war came, slaves "sacrificed all we had to come to the Yankees." Responding to listeners who might question whether the freed people owned any property before the war, Wyatt pointed out, "Some of us had some money to buy our freedom, and some of us had a house, and some of us had cattle with which we hoped sometimes to buy our freedom."

Far from pleading for unearned gifts from the Yankees, Wyatt grounded the claim to land in the sacred sweated equity blacks had amassed through ten generations of uncompensated toil in slavery:

> I may state to all our friends, and to all our enemies, that we has a right to the land where we are located. For why? I tell you. Our wives, our children, our husbands,

has been sold over and over again to purchase the lands we now locate upon; for that reason we has a divine right to the land.

Bayley Wyatt recognized that Yankees did not feel responsible for the sins of the slaveholders. Thus he did not stop at this very direct claim for title to land in the Southern states. Rather, he proceeded to remind Northerners in his audience of the sufficient contribution enslaved blacks had made to the much vaunted prosperity of the urbanizing-industrializing North:

> And then didn't we clear the lands and raise crops of corn, of cotton, of tobacco, of rice, of sugar, of everything? And then didn't the large cities in the North grow on the cotton and the sugars and the rice that we made? Yes! I appeal to the South and to the North if I hasn't spoken the words of truth. I say they have grown rich and my people is poor.

This trenchant analysis availed nothing in the face of the subversive usage of presidential pardoning power by Andrew Johnson. Yet Wyatt's rhetoric suggests the sharply conflicting interests evident as whites and blacks inside the defeated South contested for power amid their common struggle to adjust to the coming of emancipation.

II

The reconstruction of the American federal Union occurred in these most difficult circumstances. Not even Lincoln's legendary political skills could have averted bitter conflict between President and Congress for control over two issues: the terms upon which 11 seceded states would re-enter the federal Union and the civil status assigned to four million former slaves. The resort during the Civil War to enlisting 200,000 freed men into federal forces left the former slaves with a compelling claim to full citizenship. Black citizenship then became a focus for intense partisan dispute precisely because blacks were an eighth of the American population. Both of the national parties, the Democrats (out of power during the Civil War) and the Republicans (anxious to prolong their new power), quite correctly saw resolution of the core issues of Reconstruction as of vital importance to the postwar balance of political power. Republican efforts to grant full civil capacity to the former slaves inevitably became a contested issue.

Maladroit policies instituted by President Andrew Johnson transformed this unavoidably difficult situation into a prolonged, bitter, and highly partisan political stalemate. Johnson craved election as President in his own right. Doing so required revival of the Southern wing of Johnson's pre-war home, the Democratic party. Johnson did everything he could to facilitate the speedy return to power of friendly conservatives. His interim Governors used prewar racially restrictive suffrage to revive Southern civil governance. New state and local governments then turned quickly to the matter of racial domination, enacting laws known as the "Black Codes" that made mockery of emancipation by depriving freed people of civil capacity in areas such as voting, jury service, office holding, the right to bear arms, and landownership. The Johnson state governments restored as much of the old order as they dared. So brazenly did Democrats seize the reins of power that they even sent the former Confederate Vice President along with scores of other veterans of Confederate political and military service to the federal Congress scheduled to convene in early December 1865.

This situation was perhaps without precedent in the history of failed wars for national independence. Less than eight months after Lee signed the final surrender, the Southern political elite stood poised to resume its former position in the national government. Had Congress

admitted the delegations sent forward in 1865, then direct federal involvement in the affairs of the formerly seceded states would have come to an end. The severity of racial restrictions in the "Black Codes" helped turn the tide. Public opinion in the North saw the "Black Codes" as signalling intransigence among Southerners: a defiant attempt to deny the hard-won results of Union victory. As a result, northern Republicans rejected the electoral credentials of every member of Congress from a formerly seceded state. As 1866 got under way, the Johnson regimes remained in power inside the South. Meanwhile the congressional Republicans worked to prolong the control over national government, control developed during wartime when secession reduced the number of Democrats in Congress by fifty percent.

Postwar Republicans had much to defend. Operating under cover of appeals to "national emergency," the party had enacted, in rapid fire succession, a series of laws which permanently transformed the hitherto conservative position of the federal government on economic development issues. Wartime Republican majorities established a national banking system, national paper currency, direct excise and income taxation, indirect subsidies for railroad construction, aid to higher education, and high protective tariffs for American "home" industries. Before and during the war, Democrats heatedly contested each of these issues. Thus they anxiously awaited, in the immediate postwar years, the return of their Southern colleagues, so they could jointly attempt to rescind as much as possible of the Republicans' wartime legislative revolution.

This partisan contest supplied the background for Johnson's failed struggle over Reconstruction. A nationalist faction within the Republican party came to be known as the "Radical Republicans." Led by Thaddeus Stevens and Charles Sumner, the Radicals dominated the Joint Committee on Reconstruction appointed in December 1865 to craft a Reconstruction policy that would preserve Republican control over the national government. In the ensuing 30 months, the Joint Committee submitted a series of measures intended to refashion Southern political culture so dramatically as to forever bar a return to power of the "white only" Democratic political leadership that had carried 11 southern states out of the Union in order to create the Confederate States of America.

The Joint Committee proposed renewal of the Freedmen's Bureau, passage of a federal Civil Rights law, submission of a constitutional amendment to make citizens out of former slaves, the enfranchisement of freedmen and the disfranchisement of former Confederates, and the subjection of all the seceded states to strict Congressional scrutiny as part of the process of gaining readmmission to the federal Union. Johnson fought each measure. But, over the period ending in March 1868, the Radicals systematically gained passage of their program by using two-thirds majorities to override repeated Presidential vetoes.

Enactment of the Reconstruction Acts shifted the focus of attention to the struggle in the states over implementation of the Congressional plan for facilitating readmission and post-slavery adjustment. At its core, this plan envisioned the creation of new bi-racial working class Republican alliances in the former seceded states. Using the black 40 percent of the southern population as a base, Radicals reckoned that they could quickly forge a bi-racial "natural majority" by persuading as little as 25 percent of native whites to become Republicans. This majority would then have the power to dominate southern state and local government for many decades to come. In a number of states, the initial results seemed encouraging; black and white voters sent heavy Republican majorities to state constitutional conventions and to state legislatures in 1867 and 1868. But southern conservatives refused so easily to surrender control over local and state government. They employed a carefully devised and deviously implemented strategy first to frustrate the new bi-racial coalitions, then to divide the voters along racial lines, and finally to inflame racial tensions between poorer black and white Southerners.

Political violence formed an essential element of this recipe for preserving Conservative rule at home. Once it became clear that black voters could not be cajoled, bribed, or bullied into casting their precious ballots for racialist Conservatives, vigilante-style groups sprang into

existence throughout the Southern states. These groups directed their activities at the white and black leadership of the bi-racial Southern Republican parties. Where intimidation failed to work, calculated violence led to the politically motivated murders of thousands of black and white Republicans. Groups that conducted vigilante-style political violence under the Ku Klux Klan rubric eventually won the day. The federal government failed to undertake any active intervention to protect Republicans' right to vote freely. The number of Republican voters decreased in concert with escalating violence. Eventually, Southern Conservatives "redeemed" their states by replacing bi-racial governments friendly to Republican Radicals with white-line racialist regimes loyal to the Democratic Party.

Because of Constitutional provisions that gave the President control over the armed forces, Congressional Radicals could provide almost no direct assistance to the besieged newly born southern state governments. President Johnson remained adamantly opposed to the Radical program. The Radicals tried several strategies, including an 1867 act regulating "Control of the Army," and an abortive attempt, in 1868, to remove Johnson and to replace him with a more compliant President. This attempt at bloodless regicide failed when a group of seven self-described "Stalwart" Republican Senators refused to cast the single additional vote needed to convict Johnson of "high crimes and misdemeanors." A thoroughly beaten accidental President thus completed his term in 1869, handing the Presidency over to Civil War hero, Ulysses S. Grant. Support for Republican economic liberalism did not alter Grant's conservative social philosophy; he steadfastly refused to employ federal military power to intervene in Southern civil affairs, even in the face of pre-meditated political violence.

Republicans committed to federal activism fell back upon acts of Congress and on Constitutional amendments to secure for the freed people the full benefits of their emancipation. This narrowing of the scope of federal activism in the area of Civil Rights produced controversy of its own. Women objected with special intensity to the plan to draft a gendered Constitutional amendment to guarantee access to voting rights only for black males. The opportunity to grant all women the right to vote appeared during debate over how to counter the obstructionist tactics used by Southern conservatives to reduce the number of freedmen able to vote. Because the 14th Amendment had granted American citizenship to "all persons born or naturalized" in the United States, the way seemed clear for a 15th Amendment which simply guaranteed the right to vote for all "citizens" of appropriate age, this without reference to gender. The Congressional Republicans who balked at this "strong" version of the 15th angered militant advocates of immediate female suffrage.

The former slave orator Frederick Douglass found himself in a difficult predicament. Consistent suffragist rhetoric made him a hero after the 1848 Seneca Falls Women's Rights Convention. Yet in the post Civil War, Douglass discovered the difficulty of serving two masters; he could not retain influence simultaneously within radical suffragist and conservative Republican Party circles. Douglass urged women to accept gendered suffrage for black men only as the best deal they could get. But the female former slave abolitionist, Sojourner Truth, took Douglass severely to task in a pointed and bitterly ironic address to the 1868 annual meeting of the National Equal Rights Association. Sojourner Truth argued:

> There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored woman; and if colored men get their rights, and not colored women get theirs, there will be a bad time about it.... I want women to have their rights. In the courts women have no rights, no voice; nobody speaks for them.... I suppose I am about the only colored woman that goes about to speak for the rights of colored women. I want to keep the thing stirring now that the ice is broken. I have been in Washington about three years, seeing about those colored people. Now colored men have a right to vote; and what I want is to have colored women have the right to vote. There ought

to be equal rights more than ever, since colored people have got their freedom. Men have got their rights, and women has got no rights. That is the trouble. When woman gets her rights man will be right.

For once, Douglass ended up on the weaker side of calls for universal human rights. In the end, Congress enacted a narrow version of the 15th Amendment, protecting federal voting rights for black men only.

The grant of suffrage during Reconstruction allowed freedmen to make significant advances. It appears that blacks made extremely good use of the right to vote. They participated enthusiastically in the rituals of political culture and a very high proportion of those eligible registered and then cast their ballots. Hundreds of blacks won elective office at every level of American politics. The state of Mississippi sent two blacks to the United States Senate. And more than a score other blacks served in the House of Representatives.

The avidity with which blacks participated in the political process and the independence with which they cast their ballots helps to explain why political violence formed an essential component of anti-Reconstruction Southern Conservative strategy. Only by these repeated displays of lethal political violence did Conservatives "redeem" their states from biracial alliances. A decade later, the Reconstruction era's legacy of independent black voting reappeared during Populism, then ironically to give rise to the era of Jim Crow.

III

Although political participation played a crucial role in the postwar life of the Freedom Generation, it was the realm of community building that framed collective activity among the freedpeople and in which they achieved their most significant long-term gains. For while contests for elective office occurred only periodically, daily struggles for the necessities of life dominated the agendas of nearly all the millions of former slaves. Freed people emancipated with neither land nor money had, in most instances, to rely upon their own efforts to care for themselves. The question of whether enslavement had left enduring psycho-social scars on the former slaves came very rapidly to the fore. Did the Freedom Generation possess the capacity either as individuals or as a group, to behave based on aspiration, initiative, and achievement? Hotly contested, in the post-slavery years and even today, the questions of the effect life in slavery had on freed people and how long these effects would persist became central to the challenge confronting the Freedom Generation.

Family reunification became the first community building task undertaken by members of the Freedom Generation. During the Civil War and continuing for years thereafter, freed people did what they could to reknit the fabric of family life frayed during slavery. For many freed people, reunification involved solemnizing marriages begun during slavery. The Freedom Generation used the Bureau as well as local courts to solemnize scores of thousands of existing unions, a surprising number of which had endured for many decades. In other instances, reunification involved quite extensive travel in search of kin forcibly separated from their families. William Curtin, for example, rejoiced over the return, at war's end, of his father who had been sold to Virginia from Georgia: "Dat was de best thing about de war setting us free, he could come back to us." Not all quests ended happily. Indeed, the often futile attempt to re-constitute black family units disrupted during the slavery period preoccupied some freed people. Lucinda Lowery posted this notice:

Information Wanted, of Caroline Dodson, who was sold from Nashville [Tennessee], Nov. 1st, 1862, by James Lumsden to Warwick, (a trader then in

human beings), who carried her to Atlanta, Georgia, and she was last heard of in the sale pen of Robert Clark (a human trader in that place), from which she was sold. Any information of her whereabouts will be thankfully received and rewarded by her mother.

Until late in the 1880s, such notices appeared in black newspapers, offering powerful testimony to the strength of family ties fashioned in bondage and then disrupted by chattel slavery.

Strong family ties became the foundation upon which community building took place in the post-slavery period. Enumerations of the American population taken in 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900 and 1910 reveal the overwhelming preponderance of two-parent families among rural and urban blacks, North and South. Over ninety percent of rural blacks lived in kin-based extended family units; eighty percent of urban blacks were similarly situated. Thus did an "invisible" institution of the slave community (the extended family) come into view in the wake of emancipation. The preponderance of viable family units among the Freedom Generation imposed heavy responsibilities on blacks who were engaged in community building: the burden of procuring the necessities of life both for themselves and for their dependents.

Few southern whites believed that the freed people could cope well with the challenges of freedom. William G. Brownlow, Governor of the State of Tennessee, openly expressed pessimism about whether former slaves could keep body and soul together amidst the difficult conditions present in 1865. Brownlow predicted:

The negroes, like the Indian tribes will gradually become extinct, having no owners to care for them, and not owning property in them, they will cease to increase in number — cease to be looked after and cultivated — while educated labor will take the place of slave labor. Idleness, starvation and disease will remove the majority of this generation. The better class of them will go to work to sustain themselves.

Census reports demonstrate the error of his prediction; the numbers of blacks steadily increased in the decades after emancipation, this with little outside assistance. The economic and social independence attained by the Freedom Generation during the era from emancipation to segregation is surely a historic achievement.

The economic base for the successful freedom transition came primarily from continued southern reliance on commercial production of the same staple crops (cotton, tobacco, sugar, hemp and rice) that former slaves had cultivated prior to the war. So long as the South remained primarily agrarian, its economy would contain sectors in which the freed people could find employment. Most such jobs paid little beyond bare subsistence. While hardly the comfortable life in freedom the slaves had hoped to find, subsistence employment gave the freed people the means to survive and then move toward independence.

This quest for independence arose principally from the church. Black churches served as the primary pillar in the indigenous process of community development that enabled freed people to avoid wallowing in a postslavery trough of "idleness, starvation, and disease." From this base in the black church, community building led to the erection of a full array of benevolent, social, and educational institutions, in rural as well as in urban areas. And, it was these independent institutions based in the black church and controlled by black people that facilitated the successful adaptation to the freedom challenge that was achieved by the Freedom Generation.

Independent black religious experience (an activity nearly "invisible" to whites during slavery) now became the highly visible base for the community building through which freed people erected an independent institutional infrastructure. Because most of the southern states did not provide publicly supported social services, black communities were compelled to turn inward, to find spiritual resources for survival, and to erect an institutional infrastructure to provide essential services for the sick, elderly, dead and dying. By pooling scarce resources in church-sponsored social and benevolent agencies, the freedpeople employed

sturdy self-reliance as a vehicle for meeting successfully the challenge of caring for themselves and for their dependents. Locally governed churches provided the sites from which the freed people launched most of the independent social, benevolent and educational institutions that enabled the survival of the Freedom Generation.

Church-based community development left a quite varied legacy. The churches where most former slaves worshipped emphasized direct religious experience over liturgical piety. Color-caste and social class factors also influenced preferences among numerous Christian denominations. The Baptist Church became the favored denomination among the poor, darker-skinned working class majority of freedpeople, while the AME church drew its adherents principally from a somewhat more affluent and lighter-skinned minority. In 1906, the National Baptist Convention, largest of the black dominated religious groups, claimed over 2.2 millions members; the second largest group, the AME, claimed about 500,000 members. Other Protestant denominations, the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians, attracted markedly smaller number of literate, light-skinned professionals and entrepreneurs. And only in the state of Louisiana did Catholicism claim substantial numbers of black adherents.

Even within the same denomination, urban/rural differences exerted strong influences. In the city of Memphis, Tennessee, for example, a former slave preacher named Morris Henderson assumed the leading role in erecting the independent black social infrastructure. Early in 1865, the Reverend Henderson left comfortable quarters in the basement of the white-controlled First Baptist Church in favor of an outdoor "brush arbor." This move symbolized the determination manifested by the recently freed to seek places where they could worship without supervision or interference. By 1869, Henderson's church claimed a membership of more than 2,500 adults: largest among the black churches in Memphis. In 1870, Henderson moved his church into a new building on Beale Street: the location where the Beale Street Baptist Church stands to this day. First Baptist Beale became the "Mother Church" for black Baptists in Memphis. Many satellite churches sprang up within the walls of the church on Beale Street, and each embarked on community building in other parts of Memphis. Reverend Henderson and his wife Mary assumed gendered responsibility for social and benevolent activity in their church. Out of their work would emerge groups, such as the Daughters of Zion, the Sisters of Zion, and the Sons and Daughters of Zion, which pooled the meager resources of impoverished urban blacks in behalf of mutual aid. By means of habits of mutuality reinforced by communal religious values, blacks in Memphis cared for their own elderly, sick and dying, and buried their own dead: all without sustained governmental assistance.

An analogous process in a rural area (Iberia Parish, Louisiana 200 miles west of New Orleans) produced institutions appropriate for its largely agrarian milieu. Beginning in 1868, a group of families related by marriage and kin ties begun during slavery took advantage of the 1866 federal Homestead Act to purchase a series of adjoining parcels of land. These purchases led, in 1873, to the establishment of an independent settlement named Free Town. That same year, this group of extended families set aside land in Free Town for Mt. Olive Baptist Church, named to symbolize arrival in a place of independent refuge. An equal number of men and women signed the church charter, and the Reverend Robert Dyas and his wife Sarah served as pillars of Free Town thereafter. The settlement moved quickly to establish its own church, cemetery and school. Mt. Olive functioned as the center of community life, with a small store for supplies and a grist mill to grind cereal grain into meal and flour. The church also spawned a Young Men's Mutual Society which then organized an agricultural co-op to supply credit that independent black landowners often found extremely difficult to acquire. Mt. Olive stands today as substance and symbol of the efficacy and staying power of the family-based self-help infrastructure devised by the Freedom Generation.

Nothing better illustrates the significance of community-based institution building than progress achieved by the freedpeople in the struggle to throw off the blanket of illiteracy with

which slavery had shrouded them. Southern states displayed such penury toward the education of blacks that religious groups bore the principal burden of primary education until late in the 19th century. Black churches organized thousands of Sabbath Schools, schools designed to provide freedpeople with the rudimentary skills necessary for independent biblical study. This Protestant emphasis on personal engagement with the scriptures led to a more general demand for formal schooling for younger blacks. Attempts undertaken during the Civil War to educate freedpeople supplied the basis, in postwar years, for a church-based network of privately funded primary schools throughout the South.

Freed people responded positively to this new access to formal schooling. Commenting on the alacrity with which freed children in Memphis responded to new opportunities for education, a conservative editor wrote: "The Negroes, particularly the children, show an insatiable desire to learn — a greedy fondness for books." The intensity of educational interest displayed in Memphis attracted the attention of a philanthropist from the state of Pennsylvania. Dr. Francis LeMoyne donated $20,000 in 1869 to help to build a college "To fit Men and Women for entering early into the practical business of life." LeMoyne Normal and Commercial School opened its doors in the fall of 1871; and LeMoyne-Owen College continues to this day to discharge its educational mission as a historically black liberal arts college.

This pattern recurred throughout the Southern states. Opened during the Civil War/Reconstruction era in response to demands among freedpeople for education, these schools rapidly evolved into normal schools, colleges and universities. Fisk University evolved out of a school opened at Nashville, Tennessee, in 1866. Lincoln University in the capital of the State of Missouri, Howard University in the national capital, and Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia: all opened their doors in 1867. In fact, practically every one of the historically black colleges and universities now in operation dates its founding to the period 1865 to 1915: the half century just after emancipation when the Freedom Generation built the institutional infrastructure of the modern black community.

An assessment of progress in black literacy reveals the impact of access to education. The 1870 United States Census reported an 85 percent adult literacy rate for Southern whites compared to less than 10 percent for former slave adults; only 8 percent of freed children of school age attended school while 33 percent of Southern white children did so. By 1910, the emphasis among members of the Freedom Generation on educating the young had significantly altered these figures. The 1910 U.S. Census reported that white school attendance had doubled to 60 percent, while the rate for blacks was 43 percent: an increase of more than 400 percent access to formal education led to enhanced literacy. For while former slaves (blacks over age 65) reported literacy of 20 percent (compared to 85 percent for whites over 65), blacks aged 10-14 recorded an 80 percent literacy rate in comparison to a 95 percent literacy rate for Southern whites of the same age. The rapid closure of the literacy gap between white and black adolescents suggests that 40 years of emphasis on schooling had brought younger members of the Freedom Generation to a literacy rate within striking distance of their generational peers.

No person better exemplified the positive impact of access to education on black upward mobility than Booker T. Washington. Born into slavery in 1856 in Franklin County, Virginia, Washington would gain fame as the Founder of Tuskeegee Institute, an agricultural and technical school created by blacks in central Alabama anxious for a "college" to educate local youth. Washington's formal education came at Hampton Institute, an agricultural and technical school founded by Union general Samuel Chapman Armstrong out of educational activity under way among "contrabands" at Fortress Monroe. Washington came to Hampton to obtain an education; he did well enough to earn a position as an instructor. Thus when blacks from Tuskeegee asked Armstong to suggest someone to oversee creation of their school, Armstrong named his prize pupil, Booker T. Washington, as the freedman best qualified to duplicate in

Alabama what had been achieved in Virginia. From humble beginnings in 1881, Washington succeeded not only in creating at Tuskeegee an institution devoted to practical education but he succeeded as well in making himself the most powerful Afro-American of his day. Ties to captains of industry, to philanthropists, and to Republicans like the future President Theodore Roosevelt would transform Booker T. Washington into a major figure in American life.

As significant as were his later achievements, Washington is perhaps most valuable for the light his early life sheds on the grim circumstances in which most members of the Freedom Generation lived. Shortly after freedom came to the plantation where Washington and his mother lived, Washington's stepfather moved the family to a new residence in West Virginia where the stepfather had served his duty tour as a Union soldier. Schooling seemed attractive to a bright ten year old, but the pressure of economic necessity compelled a division of time between rudimentary education and labor in the salt and coal mines. Encouragement from his mother soothed the pangs of poverty while stoking ambition for self-improvement. It was his mother who secured work in domestic service which boosted Washington out of the mines and onto his journey to higher education at Hampton Institute.

Although talent and good fortune separated Washington from the mass of freed people, the ambition for improvement that motivated him was widespread among the Freedom Generation. The former slaves tried virtually every strategy possible to better conditions for themselves and their families. A freed man put the matter succinctly: "What's de use of being free if you don't own land enough to be buried in? Might juss as well stay slave all yo' days."

Black ambitions to own land encountered a major obstacle, the adamant refusal by white landowners for years after the Civil War to sell land to them. An observer aptly described this situation:

> In many portions of the Mississippi Valley the feeling against any ownership of the soil by negroes is so strong, that the man who would sell small tracts to them would be in actual personal danger. Every effort will be made to prevent negroes from acquiring lands; even the renting of small tracts to them is held to be unpatriotic and unworthy of a good citizen.

Small wonder then that a large majority of freed people experienced systematic frustration in their determined crusade to move beyond subsistence wages and toward the self-sufficiency of land ownership.

Agriculture in the postwar South underwent a prolonged decline in the decades after the Civil War. The shortage of capital to fund repairs of war damage acted as a drag on economic recovery. But war damage merely exacerbated the economic retardation produced by the poorly developed state of Southern credit, marketing, transportation, and communication facilities: all impediments inherited from slavery. However, the most important factor retarding the postwar economy was the weakness in market demand for Southern agrarian staples. Demand for cotton, sugar, rice, and tobacco remained stagnant for decades. In turn, this left little room in the market for new producers, like the millions of former slaves, anxious to acquire property as a means to economic and social independence.

The sad fate of the landless blacks trapped into debt peonage tends to obscure the mobility experience of middling and upper income blacks who managed to become small landowners. Although most of the Freedom Generation remained landless, adverse conditions did not prevent a substantial number from becoming property owners. Freed blacks acquired property most readily in areas outside the centers of commercial agriculture. Thus the greatest concentration of black landowners emerged in two areas: in depleted soil regions along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts and in the hilly, swampy, mountainous bases of the southern "backcountry." Blacks who acquired land did so in painfully small increments; they moved from share cropping

to share tenancy, from tenancy to partial ownership, and finally to full land ownership. Of the 900,000 black farming families recorded by the U. S. Census in 1910, 20 percent claimed full ownership, 5 percent claimed partial ownership, and 75 percent remained sharecroppers and tenants. This truly remarkable rate of acquisition suggests that racial discrimination inhibited but did not fully halt processes of class differentiation among the freed people in the five decades after emancipation.

Freed people in urban areas also experienced mobility into the middling and upper classes. In 1860, slaves made up 80 percent of southern artisans. Long after the war, freed men became barbers, butchers, and blacksmiths, dominating trades that provided an important source of economic independence. In addition to these artisans, a small group of hardy freed entrepreneurs embarked upon independent business ventures. Poorly developed transportation made drayage (conveying freight) a lucrative occupation for freed entrepreneurs who acquired wagons and teams. The career of Robert Reed Church demonstrated the profit potential in providing leisure activities. This Memphis freed man parlayed a small initial capital stake into a substantial fortune by focusing on leisure and real estate; Church busied himself acquiring saloons, "fancy houses," and rental property in areas populated by blacks. By 1890, this entrepreneurial acumen had enabled Robert Reed Church to amass a fortune which made him the first millionaire in Afro-American history.

Geographic mobility offered landless blacks some alternative avenues of opportunity. Migration assumed many forms. Large numbers of freed people abandoned agrarian life and moved to urban areas; the destinations tended to be inside the South until the 1890s when urban areas in the middle-Atlantic and mid-western states began receiving large black migrations. Agriculture remained the primary occupation and it appears that the bulk of black migrants moved in search either of higher wages or of opportunities for land ownership. The quest for higher wages prompted movement out of the Atlantic coastal states and into the new cotton regions emerging in the Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi "black belts;" in the Southwest, black migrants emerged in Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana. A series of concerns (anger over political violence, frustration over lack of opportunity, and land hunger) prompted three large organized migrations: the back-to-Africa Liberian exodus of 1877-79; the Kansas "Exodusters" movement, 1879-1881, and the utopian black township movement to Oklahoma in the 1890s. Although at the turn-of-the-century most of the Freedom Generation remained in the former slaveholding states, post-Civil War migrations set the stage for the rural-to-urban movements that reshaped the contours of life among Afro-Americans in the 20th century.

A remarkable group of black women led the way in re-fashioning the institutional infrastructure improvised during the first decades after emancipation. Maggie Lena Walker became the first woman bank president in the United States when she founded the Saint Luke Penny Savings Bank in Richmond, Virginia, in 1903. Born in 1867, Walker, in 1883, graduated from Richmond's Colored Normal School; she taught school, helped found Woman's Union (an insurance company), and was selected, in 1899, to serve as Right Worthy Grand Secretary of the Independent Order of St. Luke, a black mutual benefit society. Mary McLeod Bethune founded the Daytona (Florida) Normal and Industrial School for Training Negro Girls in 1904, using "$1.50 and a prayer." Born to freed parents in South Carolina in 1875, Bethune received her primary education at a school operated by the Presbyterian Board of Missions for Freedmen. After a 1922 merger with an all boys school, Bethune changed the name of the institution she founded to that which it bears today, Bethune-Cookman College.

The impetus for institution building in northern cities often came from southern migrants. Jane Edna Hunter, born in 1882 to freed parents in South Carolina and educated at an AME normal school, went to Cleveland, Ohio in 1905 to pursue a nursing career for which she had trained at Hampton Institute. Personal experience with the harsh conditions in which single southern female migrants generally lived pushed Hunter into organizing a group of

black women pledged to give a nickle per week to support the Working Girls' Home Association which they founded in 1911. Migration from the South led to the explosive growth of Cleveland's black population; it tripled between 1910 and 1920. And in turn, increased demand for social services for urban black female migrants precipitated changes in the Working Girls' Association. First, it took the name of the 18th century black poet Phyllis Wheatley. Then, Hunter devised a plan of expansion which resulted, in 1927, in the opening of an 11-story facility; this made the Phyllis Wheatley Association the largest independent black settlement house in the United States.

The patterns of female social activism revealed herein were repeated throughout the nation. Nothing better captures the motives for this activism than a speech delivered by Nannie Burroughs in 1900 to the National Baptist Convention's annual meeting. Burroughs, born in Richmond in 1878, titled her speech, "How the Sisters are Hindered from Helping;" her appeal won approval for the creation of a Woman's Convention to serve as an outlet for women's "burning zeal" to serve the interests of the race. The assumption by black women of primary responsibility for social and benevolent activity continued unabated, leading to the founding in 1896 of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW), dedicated to promoting "the welfare of our race." On NACW's Founding Board were many prominent black women, including Olivia Davidson Washington, wife of Booker T. Washington. Mary Church Terrell, first NACW President, daughter of the Memphis millionaire Robert Reed Church and a graduate of LeMoyne College, captured the essence of black female benevolent activism in a speech delivered to the New York Charity Organization Society in 1910:

> If anyone should ask me what special phase of the colored American's development makes me the most hopeful of his ultimate triumph over present obstacles, I should answer unhesitatingly, it is the magnificent work the women are doing to regenerate and elevate the race.

Female benevolent activity relied on small donations and volunteer activity to support relief work. Similar methods generated the many millions of dollars raised to pay for construction, in the years 1885 to 1915, of the monumental church edifices that now stand in cities North and South, edifices which give elegant and eloquent testimony to the success of community building initiated by members of the Freedom Generation.

IV

When Mary Church Terrell expressed optimism about "ultimate triumph over present obstacles," she referred, obliquely, to the period of intense racial crisis that confronted Afro-Americans at the turn-of-the century. Organization of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) in 1909 reflected the pervasiveness of concern generated by this crisis. Contestation over racial issues occurred both among Afro-Americans and between blacks and whites. Region-wide passage of "Jim Crow" segregation laws focused interracial strife on issues of equal access to public activities and facilities. And friction between blacks reflected principled disagreement over the best strategy for ameliorating the problems besetting Afro-Americans. These multiple dimensions of the movements protesting racialism and segregation would remain at the forefront of concern for the balance of the 20th century.

Statutory racial segregation emerged in the 1880s as Southern states enacted laws mandating separation of blacks and whites. Jim Crow began in Tennessee in 1881 with the enactment of a law allowing railroads to offer separate first class accommodations for black and white passengers. Soon thereafter, the long-simmering friction over black claims for equality

erupted in the wake of a second period of failed inter-racial political alliance. In the same way that the collapse of Radical Reconstruction occurred amid organized political violence, so too did the failure of Populism to achieve its agrarian reform agenda leave a residue of embittered racialism that found expression both in political violence and also in discriminatory laws. And while individual Southern states worked to enact Jim Crow statutes, the ideology of social Darwinism accorded the sanction of "science" to Euro-centric racialism. By 1910, Jim Crow had spread throughout the South, mandating cradle to grave segregation of whites and blacks in the public sphere.

Questions about how best to respond on racial issues (how to counter racialist violence, Jim Crow laws, and scientific racialism) sparked intense debate among Afro-Americans. Far from achieving a consensus, black educators, politicians, intellectuals, and social activists articulated sharply conflicting strategies reflective of the broadened spectrum of social conditions extant among blacks in the late 19th century. The core issue was this: should blacks fight against Jim Crow or acquiesce in that which they could not control while building strength for a counterattack when conditions improved? Mobility and class differentiation had created bases for diversity and dissent unimaginable amid the generalized poverty characteristic of the immediate post slavery years.

Frederick Douglass attempted, though late in his life, to formulate a platform for unified action. Douglass watched in shocked horror as the number of lynchings rose dramatically amid the tumult of the 1880s. Lynchings (averaging 100 each year for 30 years) took place throughout the South; they tended to occur in thinly populated rural areas recently experiencing significant black in-migration. The ritual public murders generally involved black male "strangers" who were falsely accused of sexual assault on local white women. The fateful coincidence of lynchings, Jim Crow laws, and social Darwinism prompted a deeply concerned Douglass to ask, in 1889, whether

> American justice, American liberty, American civilization, American law, and American Christianity could be made to include and protect alike all American citizens in the rights which have been guaranteed to them by the organic and fundamental laws of the land.

By appealing to American pride in the justice, liberty, civilization, law, and Christian Constitutionalism of the nation, Douglass sought to forge a basis for inter-racial amelioration of Jim Crow.

Racialism in the era of Jim Crow proved resistant to eloquent appeals, as evidenced by the events which brought Frederick Douglass and the black journalist Ida B. Wells together in an 1892 attack on lynching and racialism. Born a slave in 1862, Ida Wells received her primary and collegiate education in Mississippi. After working as a teacher for several years, Wells purchased, in 1889, part ownership in a newspaper, the *Memphis Free Speech* and *Headlight,* published by the Beale Street Baptist Church. Wells assumed editorial duties and launched a vigorous assault against lynching. Frustration over the complicity of city leaders prompted Wells to urge Memphis blacks to join the migration to Oklahoma. The departure of several thousand workers angered local businessmen who found in a May 1892 editorial a pretext for silencing Ida B. Wells. For not only did Wells dispute ritual charges of sexual assault against victims of lynching but she also questioned whether repeated reliance on false charges might be "very damaging to the moral reputation of [white] women." Within days, Memphis leaders forced closure of the *Free Speech* and exiled Ida B. Wells to Chicago, where she continued her work.

Once in Chicago, Wells launched a vigorous protest against the decision by organizers of the 1892-93 Columbian Exposition to deny permission for inclusion in the Exposition of an

exhibit by American blacks. This decision revealed the influence of scientific racialist dogma that blacks had never accomplished anything worthy of inclusion on the "Great White Way," the name given to the Exposition's brightly lighted main promenade. Wells sought out Frederick Douglass and also persuaded him to join, both in her protest and in publishing an anti-lynching pamphlet titled "The Reason Why: The Colored American Is Not In The World's Columbian Exposition."

Douglass introduced the pamphlet. His statement bemoaned the decision as a lost opportunity "to show some results of our first 30 years of acknowledged manhood and womanhood." Ridiculing the denial of black achievement by Exposition organizers, Douglass argued instead that they excluded blacks because of "Slavery" and because of reluctance to broach the subject of black achievement lest such an exhibit implicitly condemn widespread lynching. Douglass saw the epidemic of lynching as "proof that the Negro is not standing still ... he is alive and fighting his way to better conditions than those of the past." Precisely because "the enemies of the Negro see that he is making progress," insisted Douglass, "they naturally wish to stop him and keep him in just what they consider his proper place."

Concerns about the "proper place" for Afro-Americans and the best strategy for coping with violent racial conflict remained at the forefront, particularly among those charged with responsibility for symbolic evocations of "progress." Organizers of the Cotton States Exposition set for Atlanta in 1895 adopted a radically different tact than had the organizers of the Columbian Exposition. Rather than exclusion, they authorized the construction of a "Negro Building" and invited Booker T. Washington, regionally prominent for founding Tuskeegee Institute, to give the opening address. Washington's rise to national prominence was coincident with the era of Jim Crow. A champion of the interests of black landowners who generally approved of his emphasis on education to improve farm productivity, Washington viewed his Atlanta speech as an opportunity to bring about racial peace through a carefully crafted appeal to the self-interests of the growth-oriented political and business boosters of the "New South." Without hope of effective enforcement of Civil Rights from the national government, Washington saw little value in Frederick Douglass' appeals to American constitutional idealism:

> Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the production of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labor, and put brains and skills into the common occupations of life.... It is at the bottom of life that we must begin, not at the top.

Washington disapproved of Ida Wells' strident protest; "Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities." Washington also insisted that "the wisest among my race" deemed "agitation of questions of social equality [as] the extremest folly." These views prompted Washington to offer a compromise to the South's best men: he would acquiesce in segregation, which he felt powerless to overturn in the short run, in return for the end of lynching. As Washington put it, "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." Delivered seven months after Frederick Douglass' death, the speech prompted the *New York World* to describe Washington as "a negro Moses."

Dissonant responses to the hallmark speech of Washington's career reflected the importance of this symbolic passing of the torch of Afro-American leadership. Considerably less complimentary reviews came from a number of black intellectuals, most prominent of whom was the Harvard-trained sociologist, W.E.B. DuBois, a leadership rival and co-founder of the NAACP. DuBois sharply criticized Washington's effort to fashion an accommodation with segregation laws; DuBois also criticized Washington for industrial education. Instead, DuBois advocated bold action in behalf of Civil Rights and he argued for the use of liberal arts edu-

cation to create a "Talented Tenth"; DuBois saw educating elite blacks as the best method of proving to a doubting world the civilizing capacity of Afro-Americans.

Harsh criticism from northern-born blacks alienated from the agrarian South is less trenchant than a rebuke directed at Washington by Ida B. Wells, herself a former slave and product of Hampton. While acknowledging the salience of industrial education for improving the lives of rural-agrarian blacks, Wells criticized Washington for an emphasis on Tuskeegee to the detriment of other black colleges and universities. Wells also found cause for complaints in obsequious remarks credited to Washington, remarks that seemed to demean the sacrifices of freed parents: "The men and women of today are what they are by grace of the honest toil on the part of such parents." Sharp words indeed from one Freedom Generation child to another.

Wells addressed the central issue of the day, whether blacks should acquiesce in segregation or fight openly against it.

> It is indeed a bitter pill to feel that much of the unanimity with which the nation today agrees to Negro disfranchisement comes from the general acceptance of Mr. Washington's theories.

Wells here identified the core of the enigma of Booker T. Washington. Was the "Wizard of Tuskeegee" unaware of the uses white supremacists made of his compromise or did he believe that elite Southerners could control former Populists who supported Jim Crow so enthusiastically? It may well be that Washington's personal relations with the power elite led him to err badly in estimating the virulence of racialism and the efficacy of heavy reliance on the influence his elite patrons could exert upon turn-of-the-century Southern politics.

Booker T. Washington died in 1915, shortly before World War I opened the way for more than a million southern blacks to head north in search of opportunity. Left unresolved in debates between Washington and his critics was the strategic question: should blacks attempt to "use segregation as a weapon to remove segregation?" How far to rely on self-reliance? When to form alliances with whites? With which ideological factions should such alliances be forged? When to rely on constitutional litigation as opposed to direct protest? All these remained matters of contention among 20th century blacks.

V

The Freedom Generation imparted a legacy of achievement to its progeny. And the earnest desire among members of this Generation for recognition of their achievements found powerful expression in the successful agitation launched by black Virginian attorney Giles B. Jackson concerning the 1907 celebration of the Ter-Centennial of the English settlement at Jamestown. Much as had Ida B. Wells, Jackson sought recognition of black contributions and achievements in this celebration of American nationality. Like Wells, Jackson believed any such exhibit was woefully incomplete if it lacked evidence of the material advances made by Afro-Americans after slavery.

Centennial organizers initially responded ambivalently, but a persistent Giles G. Jackson eventually won his way. When he received the go ahead in 1903, Jackson incorporated "The Negro Development and Exposition Company of the United States." He then set out to procure and exhibit examples of "everything" blacks had done so that "the world may form a correct opinion of the Negro race in this country." Jackson solicited financial support from every former slaveholding state and from Congress. North Carolina appropriated $5,000: the only state to do so. Congress appropriated $100,000 to assist the project. President Theodore Roosevelt

visited the "Negro Exhibit" in June 1908 as subsequently did Booker T. Washington; both of them expressed amazement at the range of materials it contained. In this large three-story building designed and constructed by blacks were displayed some 10,000 individual exhibits; they covered the gamut of artistic, literary, industrial, and handicraft work submitted by black religious, educational, and social groups throughout America.

Giles B. Jackson took special pride in statistics that showed the scope and scale of organizational activity undertaken by the Freedom Generation. Jackson pointed out that the 1900 U.S. Census counted 24,000 black church buildings "with a seating capacity of six millions, eight hundred thousands;" property owned by these churches was valued at $26,662,448. The commitment to education remained so strong that blacks contributed more money in 1900 to support black primary schools ($1,469,000) than the $1,346,000 that was appropriated by southern state governments. Higher education remained an object of interest as well, enabling Jackson to report, "There are now in the country 136 colleges and 'Industrial Schools' exclusively for the education of negroes." The proliferation of urban social service agencies evidenced continued self-reliance. All these facts enabled presentation of a "Negro Exhibit" in which Jackson took justifiable pride. "The results were simply marvelous," concluded the organizer, "and we think it not too much to say that the Negro Exhibit was the central figure of the Exposition."

The expansive pride Giles B. Jackson expressed concerning the "Negro Exhibit" reflected the sense of achievement felt by members of the Freedom Generation. Despite setbacks, most notably the 1896 U.S. Supreme Court decision (Plessy vs Ferguson) which declared Jim Crow fell within the Constitution, former slaves and their children took understandable pride in the construction of a self-sustaining black community. Their achievements had proven skeptics like the Tennessee Reconstruction Governor Brownlow to be unequivocally wrong.

Two freed descendants of West Indiana slavery (the Johnson brothers James Weldon and Rosamond) composed, in 1900, an eloquent summation of the social ideology of the Freedom Generation. Their song, titled "Lift Every Voice and Sing," articulated so well the social ideology implemented by the Freedom Generation that it became known as the Negro National Anthem:

Lift Every Voice and Sing
Til Earth and Heaven Ring
Ring with the Harmony of Liberty
Let our Rejoicings Rise
High as the Listening Skies
Let it Resound Loud as the Rolling Sea
Sing a Song
Full of the Faith that the Dark Past Has Taught us
Sing a Song
Full of the Hope that the Present Has Brought us
Facing the Rising Sun
Of our New Day Begun
Let Us March On
Til Victory is Won

Table 6.1

Illiteracy in the Cotton South, 1870-1890*

	1870	1890
10-20 years		
Black	82.1	51,7
White	28.7	16.5
Over 20 years		
Black	90.4	75.5
White	19.8	17.1

*Percent unable to write

From: Roger L. Ransom and Richard Sutch, **One Kind of Freedom** *(Cambridge, 1977), p.30*

Table 6.2

Population of the United States, 1890

	South	North	West
Black	6,760,577	701,018	27,081
White	13,193,453	39,035,798	2,872,007
Total	20,028,059	39,817,386	3,102,269
Percent Black	33.8	1.8	0.9
Percent of U.S. Blacks in Region	90.3	9.4	0.4

From: **Negro Population, 1790-1915,** *p. 44.*

Bibliography

Anderson, James D. *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935.* Chapel Hill: U North Carolina P, 1988.

Ayers, Edward L. *The Promise of the New South: Life After Reconstruction.* New York: Oxford UP, 1992.

Carby, Hazel. *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist.* New York: Oxford UP, 1987.

Foner, Eric. *Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1983.

Franklin, John Hope and Alfred A. Moss. *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans. 7th ed.* New York: McGraw, 1994.

Gatewood, Willard B. *Aristocrats of Color: The Black Elite, 1880-1920.* Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1990.

Goodwyn, Lawrence. *Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America.* New York: Oxford UP, 1976.

Gutman, Herbert G. *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925.* New York: Vintage, 1976.

Higginbotham, *Evelyn Brooks. Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1993.

Jaynes, Gerald D. Branches *Without Roots: Genesis of the Black Working Class in the American South, 1862-1882.* New York: Oxford UP, 1986.

Johnson, Daniel M. and Rex M. Campbell, *Black Migration in America: A Social Demographic History,* Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1981.

Jones, Beverly Washington. *Quest for Equality: The Life and Writings of Mary Eliza Church Terrell, 1863-1954.* Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1990.

Litwack, Leon. *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery.* New York: Knopf, 1979.

Levine, Lawrence W. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought From Slavery to Freedom.* New York: Oxford UP, 1977.

Meier, August. *Negro Thought in America, 1880-1915.* Ann Arbor: U Michigan P, 1963.

Neverdon-Morton, Cynthia. *Afro-American Women of the South and the Advancement of the Race, 1895-1925.* Knoxville: U Tennessee P, 1989.

Ransom, Roger and Richard Sutch, *One Kind of Freedom: Economic Reconstruction in the South.* New York: Cambridge UP, 1977.

Thompson, Mildred I. Ida B. *Wells-Barnett, An Exploratory Study of an American Black Woman, 1893-1930.* Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1990.

Walker, Clarence E. A Rock in a Weary Land: *The African Methodist Episcopal Church During the Civil War and Reconstruction,* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U P, 1982.

Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1948.

Chapter Seven

BLACKS IN THE ECONOMY FROM RECONSTRUCTION TO WORLD WAR I

Gerald Jaynes

FROM SLAVERY TO SHARECROPPING

At the close of the Civil War, four million newly emancipated black slaves entered a second class status somewhere between full citizenship and slavery. Upon assuming this status they joined one-half million free blacks who had been free before the war. African Americans and their white allies in the North understood that without economic property and voting rights for blacks, the emancipation proclamation had no functional meaning either for the blacks or for American democracy. Political citizenship for African-American men was theoretically achieved when Congress passed the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the Constitution and the Civil Rights Law of 1866. But within the next quarter century those victories were rescinded as state by state the South disenfranchised black voters near the end of the 19th century.

Moreover, with respect to economic security, the freedpeople received no financial reparations for two and a third centuries of bondage. In particular, Congress refused to confiscate valuable farm lands from supporters of the former Confederacy, who were perceived as a competent managerial elite, to distribute to freedmen, who were perceived as uneducated laborers possessing no experience as independent farmers. Even so, the federal government refused to make loans of money to the owners of plantations so that the war ravaged South might be able to reconstitute its economy on a sound basis.

Thus, overwhelmingly, exslaves entered freedom with nothing to sell but their labor. Their employers were primarily former slaveowners who were bereft of capital, low on credit, and accustomed to having absolute power over the newly freed labor. Between the exslaves and previous slave owners stood the freed blacks' new found right to move freely and the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, commonly called the Freedmen's Bureau. Congress has created the Bureau as a compromise between members aligned for and against land confiscation to protect the rights of exslaves and to ensure a smooth and timely return to large crops of cotton, sugar, tobacco, and rice whose production had been severely interrupted during four years of war.

Black reconstruction began during the Civil War as thousands of runaway slaves wreaked havoc on the Confederacy's war effort. Many of them upheld their conviction that they held a right to the land when they had to be removed by military force from new homesteads on lands abandoned by slaveowners in the wake of advancing Union Armies. Blacks now possessed the freedom of continued migration; many former slaves from the Upper South and Southeast moved to the Southwest where the fertile cotton lands of Arkansas, Mississippi, and

Louisiana allowed planters to offer higher wages than elsewhere. Between 1860 and 1910, the South Atlantic States' share of the African-American population declined from 46 percent to 42 percent while the share of the West South Central States rose from 15 percent to 20 percent.

FROM GANG LABOR TO FAMILY SHARECROPPING

Sharecropping evolved as a choice neither freedpeople nor planters considered ideal. Planters desired to organize plantation labor into work gangs similar to the slavery system, and freedpeople wanted to own and work their own farms. During the initial years of Reconstruction, former slaves and slave owners faced off in a struggle to determine the specifics of the labor-management relations. The exslaves rebelled against the attempt by owners of large plantations to stimulate the labor relations of the slave regime. During the immediate post-bellum period, as had been typical during slavery, on large cotton plantations, several work gangs were employed under the supervision of a headman or overseer, and decision-making authority funneled down the hierarchy. Freedmen, women, and adolescents were organized into these work gangs, but many former slaves refused to work under gang foremen who in many cases had been the same men who as antebellum "drivers" had enforced the discipline of slavery with whips. African Americans demanded and won more freedom in the performance of their daily tasks, and especially in the conduct of their off duty personal affairs.

On the heavily capitalized sugar plantations of Louisiana, and, to a lesser extent, on the larger rice plantations of South Carolina and Georgia, the plantations that survived Reconstruction intact were generally able to maintain closely supervised work crews who were paid money wages. However, the majority of laborers on tobacco and cotton plantations worked in gangs for a sharewage (usually one-third to one-half to the laborers) of the net proceeds of the crop that was divided between anywhere from 10 to 50 workers after the crop was harvested and sold by the planter. Moreover, in those cases where African Americans did not contract to work for money wages the contracted payments were due in a lump sum at the end of the crop year. In either case, during the year, laborers obtained their subsistence food and clothing, usually on credit, from either plantation stores or independent merchants.

The Freedman's Bureau adjudicated thousands of labor disputes. The vast majority of these disputes between planters and laborers involved labor turnover as African Americans attempted to exercise their new rights of labor mobility. Labor turnover on the part of plantation owners was most frequently due to harsh supervision, such as whippings, and to the inability of a huge percentage of financially embarrassed planters to pay laborers their wages at the end of the year. But the Bureau was also involved in many arguments over work rules and payment arrangements.

In 1866 and 1868, disastrous weather conditions causing large scale crop failures left many planters unable to pay their debts to creditors and laborers. As a result, large percentages of laborers received only partial wages or no wages for a full years work. This experience led to wholesale abandonment of plantations as laborers searched for employers who could pay them wages during the harvest season. Furthermore, it led to extreme distrust between African Americans and their employers. These problems of no pay and low pay led to a large reduction in the labor little fruit for two years, reallocated their time to activities such as household chores and school.

At this time, the Freedman's Bureau ruled that while workers promised money wages were employees and could be paid after the employer had sold the crop, sharelaborers were part owners of the crop. And, as part owners, they had the right to demand division of the crop in the field after which they could dispose of their share as they wished. Given the huge number of landlords who were defaulting on their payments to laborers, this ruling, which the Bureau enforced with the military, led laborers to demand shares because that form of pay-

Black Female Workers in a Tobacco Factory.
(Cook Collection, Valentine Museum, Richmond, Virginia.)

ment provided greater security to the laborer than did postharvest wages. By 1867 only those planters with the greatest reputations of solvency and access to cash or credit could hire labor for wages as African Americans were demanding to work for a share of the crop where, in their words, they were "part owners of the crop."

The system of paying laborers one-half the crop while still working them in large gangs frequently resulted in severe labor incentive problems and inefficient work. Because all workers received a portion of the entire gang's share, better workers felt that they were being cheated and refused to work with those they considered inefficient. Moreover, some workers, recognized that since they were only part of a large work gang, their share of the crop would not be substantially reduced if they shirked their responsibilities. These developments increased absenteeism and other poor work habits causing many arguments. To avoid this problem of the free-rider, the size of work gangs was reduced and workers were allowed to choose their co-workers.

During approximately a ten year period, from 1865 to 1875, planters and laborers experimented with many types of labor systems. By the late 1860s, many aspects of managerial authority had flowed from planters to laborers as small groups of men and women formed work groups that collectively contracted with planters for a group share of the crop. These works collectively called variously "squads," "associations," and "clubs," frequently functioned as democratic majority-rule worker collectives who seriously threatened the managerial authority of planters.

During the 1870s, throughout the cotton and tobacco areas of the South, the scaling down of workgroup size to better meet demands for efficiency and equity among workers, the practice of allowing self-selection of co-workers, and African Americans' demand for family autonomy led to the proliferation of share tenancy for one-half the crop by families working

a small farm to themselves. Whether the planters anticipated it or not, the individualism inherent in family share tenancy destroyed the collective esprit of the cotton and tobacco laborers, and unlike the wage hands on sugar plantations who continued to agitate and sometimes to lead insurrections against employers and the state for better working conditions, share tenants became a conservative work force whose deep but unvoiced animosity for their plight only occasionally led to organized activism.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN AGRARIANISM

An interaction between politics and African-American self-help was a defining characteristic of the Reconstruction period in the southern states. Even before blacks obtained the vote in 1868, blacks and their Republican allies continued the quest for economic security for the ex-slaves at the state and local levels. In southern state legislatures, African-American politicians such as John Rapier of Alabama, Tunis Campbell of Georgia, John Lynch of Mississippi, and Miflin Gibbs of Arkansas were strong proponents of the rights of labor and the small farmer. They and other Republicans campaigned for homestead laws to enable landless families to acquire unsettled federal land. African-American leaders and whites, many of them Union Army veterans, started collective societies that raised money to buy and work land. The legislatures of a number of States passed laws that were decidedly pro-labor and as such raised the ire of large owners of property. For example, states such as South Carolina, Alabama, and Georgia passed laws that gave the laborer first right to cotton and other cash crops as a lien on his or her claims for wages or a share of the crop. Property taxes were increased to pay for improved public education and economic development.

REINSTITUTION OF WHITE SUPREMACY

African-American agrarianism and the political participation that preceded full institution of family sharecropping should be understood as twin activities whose common objective was to transfer economic and political power from the landowning and former slaveholder class to the working classes of the South. As such the attempt to institute economic and political democracy in the South posed a serious threat to the established property interests. The story of their violent reply has often been told. By defining the political and economic contest as determining which race would control the South, as opposed to the real issue of what classes would control its political and economic institutions, the planters and their allies managed to focus all questions on the issue of race. To drive African Americans from the political process and to prevent them from using collective efforts to improve their economic status, the Ku Klux Klan and other terrorist organizations used extreme violence and terrorism.

In conjunction with their use of violence, white southerners' control of state legislatures enabled them to proscribe the freedoms of blacks. A preview of the intentions of those whites with views most inimical to African Americans had been provided at the end of the Civil War. During late 1865 and early 1866, "reconstructed" governments of those states that had composed the Confederacy, under the provisions of President Andrew Johnson's reconstruction procedures, held state constitutional conventions. Many of the delegates to these constitutional conventions were exslave-owners and had been officers in the military and civil branches of the Confederate government. Emboldened by former slaveholder President Johnson's lenient policies toward them, these assemblages drafted and passed constitutions that defined in no uncertain legal terms the inferior civil status of blacks in their states. These statutes came to be known as the Black Codes.

The Black Codes did indeed make it clear that state governments in the South would make black men and women second class citizens with few rights. Blacks were explicitly denied the rights to vote, to serve on juries, and to testify in cases involving white defendants.

However, the major thrust of the code was the attempt to curtail the ability of exslaves to improve their circumstances by seeking employers. The State of Mississippi passed the earliest and most repressive Black Codes. All blacks were required to have written evidence, by January of each year, that they were employed for the ensuing year. To further immobilize blacks the code contained an antienticement law that made it a crime for any employer to attempt to hire a freedperson who was working for another employer, and backed it with a fine of $500 or a prison sentence. Workers who left their employment before the end of a contract forfeited their entire wages and the code authorized any white person to arrest any black who had quit a job before the contract expired. To further guarantee a docile labor force of blacks, freedmen were prohibited from renting land.

Just in case freedpeople found any loopholes in Black Codes, Mississippi, like other states, passed a vagrancy law aimed at restricting occupational mobility and general free movement. The vagrancy laws imposed fines or involuntary labor on broad categories of blacks who were considered engaged in antisocial or nonproductive activities, categories such as "rogues," "jugglers or persons practicing unlawful games or plays," and "persons who neglect their calling or employment" in Mississippi. South Carolina's vagrancy law was just as draconian. On the list of persons it applied to were "common gamblers, persons who lead disorderly lives or keep or frequent disorderly or disreputable houses;…those who are engaged in representing…without license, any tragedy, interlude, comedy, farce, play;… exhibition of the circus, sleight of hand, wax-works;…fortune-tellers, sturdy beggars, common drunkards."

After wresting control of reconstruction policy from the President, the United States Congress vetoed the Black Codes with the Civil Rights Act of 1866 which outlawed discrimination. But these codes showed the way for later state legislation after Reconstruction ended and whites moved to institute a legal system of discrimination and segregation against black residents of the states that had formerly made up the Confederacy.

By the 1880s, the southern states had reinstituted the spirit of the Black Codes by passing legislation that made no mention of race, and, therefore, presumably bypassed constitutional objections, but was intended to be enforced only against black people. Antienticement laws and somewhat less ridiculously worded vagrancy laws were passed; rural blacks' ability to supplement their diets through hunting and fishing was proscribed; and various petty crimes, such as damage of private property and theft of objects of small value, were made high crimes punishable by forced servitude as convict labor. Sharecroppers were legally defined as wage laborers, and they lost their rights to the crop and a first lien on that crop to protect their wages. Perhaps the most detrimental incursion against the rights of free laborers to seek new employment were the so called "embezzlement" or "false pretense" laws such as Alabama's which made it a crime for a laborer indebted to an employer to leave without permission, because he or she could be charged by the employer with having accepted the money knowing that the work would not be completed. These laws could keep sharecroppers, who had to accept loans from their landlords in order to subsist during the year, tied to one employer for several years.

In the South, by the end of the 19th Century, the force of the new laws passed by state legislatures and the nonenforcement of civil protections embodied in federal laws, had effected the repeal of four legislative triumphs of the Reconstruction period: the Civil Rights Act of 1866 and the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the United States Constitution. With blacks lacking protections in white controlled courts and police departments, any white was virtually free to discriminate against any black, the 14th amendment's equal protection of citizens' rights was a mockery, and black male suffrage granted by the 15th amendment had been stripped by state voting and registration laws. Overall it is not too much to conclude that the slavelike civil status of blacks — who had no vote, were segregated into inferior schools and public conveyances, and rarely had standing in court against whites — also demonstrated that

while the 13th amendment's outlawing of slavery still held, its effects had been restricted about as far as was practically possible.

A major cost of the race relations of discrimination and segregation was the lack of a political bond between blacks and the descendants of the nonslaveholding whites. Devastated by the Civil War and the credit famine and crop failure conditions of the War's immediate aftermath, small white farmers in the upland regions of the cotton South also became impoverished. The racial segregation of southern life was well illustrated in the geographical division of black and white agricultural labor. From the latter quarter of the 19th century onwards, while labor on large cotton plantations in the lower South was overwhelmingly black, relatively small farms owned and worked by white families produced increasing quantities of cotton in the piedmont regions of the upper South. White and black cotton producers became victims of a brutal economic system wherein low cotton prices throughout the latter 19th century and most of the first half of the 20th tied them to a cycle of credit advances, poverty, and debt to landowners and merchants that for many often became a cruel form of debt peonage.

INDUSTRIAL LABOR

According to the United States census of 1890 (see Chart 7.1), a huge majority of African Americans were employed as laborers in agriculture and in personal service.

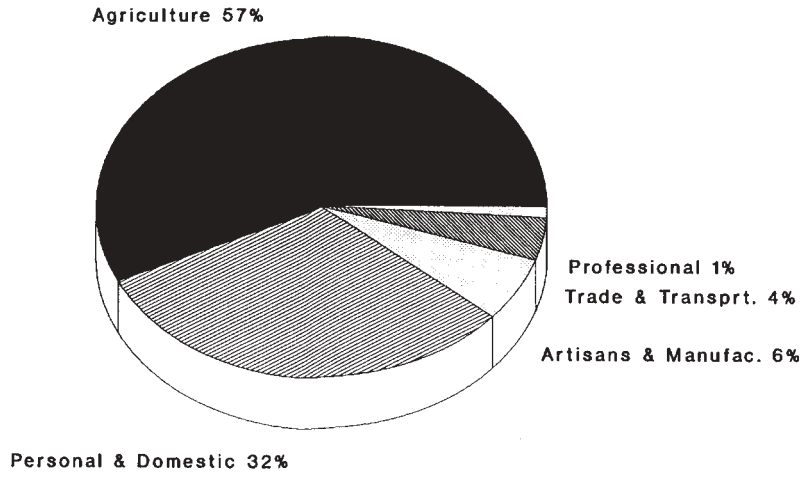


Chart 7.1, *Employment of African Americans, 1890. (Gerald Jaynes)*

Approximately 90 percent of the black population of roughly 7.5 million Americans lived in the South.

By 1900, employment in the South was dominated by a pattern of segregation wherein one race through economic competition, politics, or violence essentially drove the other race from the industry or from many occupations within the industry. The textile industry, which hardly existed in the South before the Civil War, was nearly completely staffed by white men, women, and children. Economic segregation exhibited a perverse symmetry with black and white families involved in cotton production largely separated by geography whereas black and white families involved in manufacturing were separated by the refusal of textile employers to hire African Americans.

Many African Americans worked outside the plantations where they found employment with railroads, in coal mines, in the growing lumber mill and turpentine industries that

became important to the southern economy, and in the non-farm tobacco industry centered in the upper South. Moreover, black labor, because it could be obtained cheaply from plantations, was a major factor in the rise of the southern iron and steel industries. Many of these industries managed to keep wages low and working conditions barbarous by working convict labor hired from the state alongside free wage earners.

TRADE UNIONS

Before the Civil War, skilled slaves, hired out by their masters, often competed with white craftsmen for work. Competition from slaves lowered wages and impeded unionization. Instead of opposing the slavery that was responsible for the conditions, southern white workers generally became antagonistic toward the slaves, and, in the North, blacks were similarly despised by white working classes. Expectations that this tradition of antagonism between black and white working class people would continue after emancipation was affirmed during the draft riots of 1863 when thousands of rioting working class New Yorkers, protesting class biased draft laws and the Republican Party, attacked African Americans, injuring a man; and in 1865, white workers in the Baltimore shipyards and docks waged a long and victorious strike to drive blacks from the better skilled jobs. In Washington, D.C., the white bricklayers' union expelled four members found working with blacks on a government job in 1869.

Only in industries where large numbers of African Americans had acquired experience as slaves, where there were no significant technological changes in the conditions of work to disadvantage blacks who were discriminated against when seeking training, and where unionization among whites was not strong, were blacks able to maintain an employment presence. Indeed, blacks were often used to break unions that were forming or were existent but weak. For example, during the decades after 1870, blacks pushed many whites from the iron and coal industries as iron and coal producers in Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee recruited black labor and placed it in the semiskilled jobs in order to break the strength of incipient labor organization among whites.

On the other side of the ledger was the contract construction industry where, throughout the South, thousands of freed slave craftsmen were a strong economic force into the 20th century. From among their ranks arose many black contractors who, unfortunately, along with black skilled workers, were gradually squeezed out of the mainstream of the industry by white contractors and craftsmen who generally refused to work with or for blacks. Moreover, the highly discriminatory training and educational opportunities in the private and public sectors prevented African Americans from adapting skills to technologically changing crafts. This was especially true in the newer electrical, plumbing, and mechanical trades which developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Such disabilities meant that African Americans generally were forced to compete against white unions or had to accommodate themselves to white superiority in union privileges. Thus, in Baltimore, black craftsmen driven from the shipyards organized a cooperative shipbuilding company and operated it successfully for two decades until changing conditions in the industry and racism caused it to fail. The leader of the Baltimore shipyard workers, Samuel L. Meyers, became president of the Colored National Labor Union which sought to organize African-American laborers and was a major national force in black union activity during the latter part of the 19th century. But the Colored National Labor Union, tied to the Republican party's philosophy that employers and workmen should cooperate and that laborers' greatest achievements would be to become business proprietors themselves, largely became a middle class organization that provided no sound basis for development of a trade union movement among African Americans.

Throughout America, unionization benefitted only white workers who did their best to exclude blacks from occupations over which unions had control. In the South, where at the end

of the 19th century African Americans could be found in various occupations, by the late 1920s growing union control over these jobs would result in losses of jobs for blacks. Loss of skilled positions in railroad work is illustrative. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, blacks were employed by railroads as firemen, brakemen, and even as engineers, but unionization led to their ouster from these jobs in the face of a vicious campaign by white unionists to make the occupations all white. In some cases, the desire to rid an occupation of black competition led to extreme violence, as in the case when the Brotherhood of Railroad Workers in Memphis, Tennessee, placed a bounty of $300 on the heads of black firemen. Three African-American firemen were kidnapped and murdered for the reward. Throughout most of the first two-thirds of the 20th century, the only railroad employment open to blacks would be the demanding physical labor of building and repairing the rails and of being porters, cooks, and waiters.

During the late 19th century, two disparate philosophies of trade unionism competed to determine the character of the labor movement in the United States. The more conservative craft union philosophy was represented by the independent, and largely self-interested, craft unions that basically sought to improve the working conditions of their memberships by erecting barriers to prevent outsiders from competing with them. The alternative was to organize workers by industry so that the interests of an industrial union would be tied to every craft practiced in the industry. This philosophy was represented by the Knights of Labor who in their own words sought to "promote [the] welfare of the masses." In 1893, the AFL national convention unanimously resolved that working people must unite regardless of "creed, color, sex, nationality, or politics;" but its organizational structure and philosophy, which gave so much power to locally organized crafts, allowed rabid racism and exclusion of blacks to persist in most locals. Few African Americans gained entry to the AFL. By contrast the Knights of Labor organized independent of race but they too could not overcome the specter of racial animosity. Many chapters of the Knights of Labor had separate black and white locals.

However, here and there, biracial unions arose that reached an accommodation between the races. Thus, numerous dockworkers along the southeastern seaboard in places such as Charleston in South Carolina, New Orleans in Louisiana, and Mobile in Alabama had biracial unions that share employment and union offices through a kind of racial quota system. Frequently whites received more than the share warranted by their numbers. And in the coal fields of southern Ohio, western Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, the United Mine Workers achieved a similar biracial accommodation. Among the United Mine Workers, blacks were influential in union activities and some such as Richard L. Davis would rise to assume national office in the union hierarchy during the 20th century. Even so, at the turn of the 20th century, the relationship between the labor movement and the African Americans was primarily a contentious and competitive affair that weakened the economic goals of both.

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

African Americans' strongest asset in a discriminatory environment was their willingness to work harder, longer, and for less pay — simply because they had to if work was to be had at all. The labor market condition of African-American women typified this status. According to the censuses of 1890 and 1900, black women were overwhelmingly employed in domestic service and on farms. For example, according to the census of 1900, an astonishing 96 percent of African-American women working for wages were employed as either field workers, house servants, waitresses, or laundry workers.

Throughout the nation, the discrimination against blacks in general kept African Americans in such poverty that even lower middle class whites could afford to hire black women as cooks and house cleaners. These positions involved long hours under close supervision and offered the lowest of wages. In cities such as Cincinnati, Ohio, a typical occupation

for many African-American women was to set up their businesses by contracting to wash the clothes of a number of white families each week. This back-breaking labor was the main support of many African-American households.

Black women were also employed in factories. And it appears that in the few instances where African-American women could obtain alternative sources of employment they chose to abandon domestic labor. Along the Southeastern seaboard, they found seasonal employment in the dirty and difficult working conditions in various factories in the seafood processing industry. In many seaport towns, African-American women, and men, engaged in the excruciatingly dirty, smelly, and physically demanding task of shucking oysters. But the desire of black women to escape domestic employment was demonstrated by the fact that, during the oyster industry's busy season, September through April, domestic workers in such towns were difficult to hire. But the seasonality of the work meant that ultimately some of the women would have to return to domestic labor.

Slaves had provided the primary labor source in antebellum Virginia tobacco plants and, after the Civil War, African Americans remained a significant factor in the tobacco factories of the upper South. By 1910, the 11 former confederate states employed over 8,000 African-American women in the least desirable and lowest paying occupations in tobacco factories. African Americans were primarily restricted to the cigar and chewing tobacco sectors of the industry. The newer and more mechanized and higher-average-pay cigarette industry came to be dominated by white women's labor. This practice was replicated in the cotton textile industry where black women were virtually shut out of an industry that became the major employer of women.

THE FIRST MASS URBANIZATION

Between 1880 and 1910, nearly 17 million Europeans emigrated to the United States. These immigrants overwhelmingly entered the country though the ports of New York and New Jersey and spread throughout the Northeastern and midwestern United States where they swelled the size of the labor force and precipitated a great competition for jobs, housing, and other resources. There was little demand for African-American labor outside the South, and migration of blacks out of the South during this period was relatively low.

In the northern states, the discriminatory conditions that had existed before the Civil War continued throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th. Furthermore, the continuing arrival of millions of immigrants from Europe crowded African Americans out of jobs they had held and made it all but impossible for them to secure employment in newer occupations. The combination of discrimination, employers' preferences for white immigrants, and crowded urban labor markets restricted black men's and women's employment to only a few areas.

In cities like Atlanta, Chicago, New Orleans, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and San Francisco and hundreds of smaller towns, with few exceptions, blacks were proscribed from employment in all but menial laboring and personal service positions. Blacks with higher levels of education and skills had to accept employment well below their abilities or they had to find some way to operate a business within the segregated African-American community. For example, in his 1899 study *The Philadelphia Negro,* W.E.B. Dubois wrote of a young African American who had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in engineering but could only find employment as a waiter in the Philadelphia of the late 1890s. He wrote also of well-educated young black women who, seeking employment as clerical workers and secretaries, were constantly turned away because no office would have a colored person. Alexander Bouchet, a brilliant honors graduate of Yale and only the 4th American to earn a doctorate degree in physics, spent his life teaching in a high school for colored boys in Philadelphia.

But the eruption of World War I in 1914 would halt the European migration and also create a boon for industry in the United States. Northern employers, starved for labor, turned to the laborers of the South. Black and white southern labor responded positively and a great competition for agricultural labor developed. Hundreds of labor agents from northern and southern factories scoured the rural South searching for laborers while evading the landlords and local authorities who fought, sometimes with violent extra-legal methods, to retain the labor in the rural South.

Approximately 525,000 African Americans migrated to the urban North between 1910 and1920 in search of a promised land that had been depicted in an exaggerated way by urban labor agents. Prior to the War, African-American migrants in the urban North had been primarily restricted to employment as janitors, porters, and servants, but during the War, blacks, newcomers and old urban dwellers alike, were hired for jobs that had previously been restricted to whites. For the most part, however, African-American men were still at best employers' second choice to white labor, and the jobs they could obtain often were in areas "designated" for blacks because they required work in extreme heat, moisture, dust, or some other undesirable condition. For example, African-American men were typically preferred in jobs requiring them speedily and efficiently to perform heavy and exacting labor. Such jobs were performed by asphalt workers who used heated tools on hot asphalt during the summer and by workers in the acid baths in the iron and steel industry.

For example, in Chicago, in 1910, over 51 percent of African-American men were in domestic and personal service; in 1920 this percentage had fallen to 28 even though the black population had increased significantly. By 1920, factory work would become the most important source of employment for black men who would even manage to increase their representation in semiskilled jobs.

Opportunities for African-American women were not as good. While more jobs opened for them in manufacturing and trade, black women were still overwhelmingly restricted to domestic service where 64 percent of employed African-American women labored. These restrictions applied regardless of skill and qualifications. Their high school and college educations earning them no greater employment opportunity than those found by illiterate peasants from tobacco plantations, urban-born and educated black women were unable to obtain work anywhere but in domestic service.

Thus, at the beginning of the 20th century, African Americans' labor market position, as badly proscribed as it was, could only be compared favorably to a slavery that had been escaped a mere 35 years earlier. The initial three decades of the new century would bring even greater improvements in many African Americans' economic position. As a group, they would become much less concentrated in the rural South, and would be more represented in manufacturing and trade industries. But they would remain severely underrepresented as artisans and operatives and in clerical and business and professional positions. Overwhelmingly, African-American women would continue to have few opportunities outside domestic and personal service occupations and black men would continue to find themselves chiefly relegated to positions as common laborers. A majority were still tied to occupations connected to agriculture in the rural South. There the everyday task of making a living proved difficult in the best of years, but was made bearable through the pleasures obtained from the creative energy of black folk culture that was soon to provide the world with astounding artistic gifts.

Table 7.1

Farmers in the South, 1910

Tenure	Number		Percent	
	Black	White	Black	White
Owners	218,467	1,326,044	24.5	60.1
Tenants	670,474	866,278	75.3	39.2
Managers	1,200	15,084	0.1	0.7
Total	890,141	2,207,406		

From: **Negro Population,** *1790-1915, p. 572.*

Bibliography

Daniel, Pete. T*he Shadow of the Plantation: Peonage in the South, 1901-1969.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.

DeCanio, Stephen J. *Agriculture in the Postbellum South.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.

Higgs, Robert. *Competition and Coercion: Blacks in the American Economy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977

Fite, Gilbert. *Cotton Fields No More: Southern Agriculture, 1865-1980.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984.

Jaynes, Gerald D. *Branches Without Roots.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Jones, Jacqueline. *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow. 1985.*

Mandle, Jay. *The Roots of Black Poverty.* Durham: Duke University Press, 1978.

Novack, Daniel A. *The Wheel of Servitude: Black Forced Labor after Slavery.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1978.

Rachleff, Peter J. *Black Labor in the South.* 1984.

Ransom, Roger L. and Richard Sutch. *One Kind of Freedom: The Economic Consequences of Emancipation.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Rosengarten, Theodore. *All God's Dangers*. 1975.

Wright, Gavin. *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1986.

Woodman, Harold. *King Cotton and his Retainers: Financing and Marketing the Cotton Crop of the South, 1800-1925.* Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1968.

Woodman, Harold. *New South, New Law: The Legal Foundations of Credit and Labor Relations in the Postbellum South.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State university Press, 1995.

Chapter Eight

Black Migration and Urbanization, 1900-1940

Carole C. Marks

The dual processes of urbanization and migration dramatically increased the proportion of blacks living in northern cities between 1916 and 1940. This demographic shift involved the uneasy mingling of the cultures of southern and northern blacks and the eventual evolution of a new urban African-American culture. Distinctive class formations and institutional structures were also produced in the North in response to the de facto segregation the migrants faced.

Before the 19th century, black migration from rural to urban areas occurred within the South, but after the turn of the century, migration to the North became increasingly important. In the summer of 1916, a steady stream of the descendants of slaves flowed north to the booming war economies of Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Detroit. Their arrival quickly reached flood stage. In two years, over 300,000 migrants made their way north. By 1930, nearly two million blacks had left the South. This was the Great Migration.

Two major forces sparked the exodus, the boll weevil invasion in the South and the Great War in Europe. The boll weevil invasion destroyed the region's cotton crops and eliminated a major source of employment. Coupled with nascent industrialization, it transformed the mobility of employment, and jobs once set aside for blacks became coveted by whites. Whites worked on the railroads. Whites worked as barbers. Whites worked as street cleaners. Blacks were unemployed.

At the same time, the war in Europe created hundreds of thousands of jobs in the North and a shortage of unskilled labor. Recruitment from the South began cautiously but gained momentum as fears of tapping into reserves of unqualified black labor were replaced with experiences of finding numerous able and willing substitutes. After a visit to Cleveland in 1917, a federal investigator reported, "A big manufacturing concern has followed the practice for a number of years of sending a recruiting agent into the South among negro schools that have trades departments and picking out good material, and using these young men during the summer vacation. In this way, they have built up a very strong force of colored workers."

While individual migrants cited a myriad of reasons for leaving, a faltering southern economy and a booming northern one represent the backdrop against which the migration forces were played out. Louise Kennedy called it the "general predominance of the economic motive" and points out that black migration has historically occurred in years where there were "floods and crop failures in the South (1878-1879, 1916-1918, and 1923) coincident with boom periods and aggravated demands for workers in other regions."

Economic changes occurring in both the South and North were instrumental in sparking the migration. The sheer volume of the movement would not have been sustained without the bust of the South, boom of the North. Table 8.1 shows net migration from the South for the years 1900 to 1930, for both whites and blacks.

Table 8.1
Net Migration from the South, 1900 to 1930

Decade	Native White	Black
1900-1910	69,000	194,000
1910-1920	663,000	555,000
1920-1930	704,000	903,000

Source: Hope T. Eldridge and Dorothy S. Thomas, **Population Redistribution and Economic Growth,** ***vol.3 (Philadelphia American Philosophical Society, 1964)***

In the period 1900 to 1910, black migration from the South was significant, but not as dramatic as it was in the period 1910 to 1920. As Gavin Wright explains, "What happened during the high-pressure years of 1916-19 was not simply a change in racial employment policies but a redirection of the geographic scope of unskilled labor markets."

The notion that emphasis on the primacy of economic forces turns the migrants into "objects" has gained great currency in recent years. Lawrence Levine observes, "As indisputedly important as the economic motive was, it is possible to overstress it so that the black migration is converted into an inexorable force and Negroes are seen once again not as actors capable of affecting at least some part of their destinies, but primarily as beings who are acted upon — southern leaves blown north by the winds of destitution." James Grossman argues further that "economic changes do not provide sufficient insight into the migrants, their values, or their experiences." These writers assume that migrants persuaded by economic forces somehow cede control of their lives, creating a false dichotomy between things economic and things non-economic.

In the rush to distance migrants from derisive labels, they sacrifice the rich examples of their "pragmatic economic" behavior. This paper seeks to bring economically motivated behavior back into the discussion of the values and experiences of individual migrants. It does not deny that migrants left the "land of suffering" "when ubiquitous exploitation reached intolerable levels," but it does call for a more balanced view of their goals and options. It attempts to combine macro and micro-perspectives, as Silvia Pedraza suggests, "to capture both individuals as agents, and social structure as delimiting and enabling."

Labor migrants were active participants in the migration process. They decided the timing of their moves, making decisions about location, specific employment, and even the nature of that employment. They constantly attempt to control the world around them by negotiation, bargaining, and compromise. As Joseph Trotter concludes, "In fundamental ways, they actively shaped and directed their own existence." Their motivations were rarely heroic, romantic, or uplifting. When asked why she left the South, one migrant replied, "I left Georgia because I wanted better privileges." When asked if that meant, "mixed schools, white churches, and association with white people in their homes generally," she responded, "No, I don't care nothing about that, but I just want to be somewhere where I won't be scared all the time that something is going to break loose."

The South in 1916 was not so much a backward region as an isolated one. Industrialization had begun there as early as the 1880s, when campaigns for economic development brought investment and mechanization to a variety of enterprises. But development in the New South did not mean upward mobility for its work force. In comparison to those in the Northeast and Midwest, southern workers were grossly underpaid. Wages in the South were only about two thirds of those paid elsewhere. The South's separation from the rest of the country was due to several factors: its unique institution of slavery, its slow recovery from the devastating Civil War, and its over reliance on cotton.

Mechanisms that would have facilitated the normal movement of labor from low wage to high wage settings were all but absent. Indeed the South, in its relationship to the economically advanced North, represented more of a colony of raw material export than an equal trading partner. Less developed in every aspect of production, it was dependent on the North for much of its financing and manufacture. Indigenous industries like tobacco manufacture, furniture making, and mining failed to generate surplus capital. In the absence of a reciprocal exchange of workers and products, the information channels crucial for employment were missing. Before the migration, skilled white and black workers, traditionally the first labor sector to take advantage of migration inducements, remained in the South. Given the wage disparity, this failure to leave would seem irrational. Their sources of information about employment, however, were inadequate.

With the beginning of the War in Europe in 1914, the supply of northern labor began to dwindle. European migrants who had been entering the United States at a rate of over a million a year since 1900 were cut off almost entirely. Coupled with a labor shortage, the increase in orders for war materials and supplies kindled a heightened search for alternate sources.

Labor recruitment from the South involved both white and black workers. In fact, Nell Painter points out, "White southerners migrated north in far greater numbers than blacks, but their migration did not attract the same notice or violence." A federal investigator observed, "Other races have come to the city bringing all their foreign customs, superstitions, and varying modes of living, and although they have come to this industrial center in large numbers, their coming has not been attended by outbursts of hatred and demonstrations in public places. They have been accepted — not always as a desirable element — but at least as something to be tolerated."

Labor recruitment from the South was highly selective. Not everybody went north. As Wright explains, "The migrants were by no means typical southerners. Perhaps half or more came from towns and cities, and had long since left agricultural work. The great majority of departures from the Alabama steel towns of Birmingham and Bessemer were experienced miners heading for the coal fields of Kentucky, West Virginia and Pennsylvania." Florette Henri confirms this, citing a Department of Labor report which estimates that "about half the migrants came from towns."

Moreover, the "typical migrant" often characterized as an illiterate "sharecropper" ready to please and to work, was actually a distinct minority of the migrating population. As Henri points out, "Since so much of the South was rural, it is amazing the number of [different] occupations represented by the migrants. In part this may be explained by the simple diversity of rural employment." Peter Gottlieb has suggested, "In the interludes of light farm work rural blacks moved to sawmills, logging camps, railroad construction and tie-cutting camps, turpentine camps, brickyards, coal mines, steel mills, and river or ocean docks." He adds, "The repeated shifts from farm to nonfarm work and the attainment of an independent status allowed rural blacks to link their routine lives to the urbanizing world of the South and the nation.... Consequently, rural blacks were already partially inducted into industrial and urban modes of labor by 1916, well prepared to seek the best-paying line of work they could find." "What is quite clear," concludes Wright, "is that established tenants did not leave in any great numbers."

The "induction" of migrants into industrial and urban modes involved not only their labor. The desire to obtain control and operate independently was often in evidence. Armstead Robinson writes, as early as emancipation "freedmen worked diligently to expand the realms of their lives in which they exercised autonomy." Commitment to education for themselves and their children, commitment to community uplift, and the "emergence of a panoply of voluntary self-help organizations, groups such as benevolent and mutual aid societies, lodges, literary associations," head the list of strategies used by these southerners to shape their world. By the time of the migration, a second generation had erected, supported, and controlled a host of these religious, educational, and social institutions in the South. As is evident from migrant testimony, they took these skills, and at times the institutions themselves, with them to the North.

The decision to leave varied greatly among the migrating population. Some talked of "freedom and independence" as their primary motives. Others intended to stay only long enough to make a little savings. As one migrant said of her husband, "He first planned to work and go back, like so many others. So many of the people that came here back in those days didn't come here to stay. They didn't like it here. They didn't like the weather, It was so different to their way of life at home." Another migrant who had begun working as a farmer and had "drifted to public works in Anniston" had gone into foundry work. He transferred to the North for a higher wage, notes Campbell, but "stated he was going home for the winter. The reason was that the weather was getting cold and he wanted to protect his health. He stated further that he had saved enough money to get along in the South comfortably until the spring, when he would go back to his work in the North."

Transportation costs alone precluded many from making the journey to the promised land. Train fares for those who worked outside the wage economy were obviously prohibitive. Many who did work for a wage found that they had to make the journey north in stages, stopping off and working in several intermediate points in the South before coming north. This "step migration," as it is called, could take many years. "It took Sara Brooks," according to Darlene Clark Hine, "almost fifteen years to reconstitute her family, to retrieve her three sons left behind in Orchard, Alabama."

Migrant selectivity involved not only experience, but age and gender. Young healthy males were the sought-after population, induced to do the dirty work of northern industry. Though there is much emphasis in the literature that changes in attitudes caused their willingness to leave, what is neglected is the fact that disruptions within southern rural economies reversed the position of sons from unpaid helpers to "wage contributors to annual family income." This shift created within the sons a desire for "freedom and independence" from family patterns of subsistence farming. As Pedraza concludes, "both sons and wives undertook the decision to migrate because of the gains in personal autonomy they anticipated."

One farmer gave the following account of his journey north, "I had some boys working in Birmingham, so I went there first, Everything looked pretty good and I decided to bring the old lady to Birmingham, which I did. We got along pretty good there, but I heard about work up here, so me and my sons came up here, and after we got all settled, sent back for my wife and daughter." In many cases, sons were actually sponsored in their leaving.

Gottlieb points out that in one Pittsburgh iron mill, during the years l916 to 1930, 45 percent of the African-American migrants hired were between the ages of 15 and 24. This compares to a rate of only 21 percent in this age group for the population as a whole. The ease with which single men could "quickly respond to sudden economic opportunities" in part explains this preponderance. It has also been argued that young blacks in the South had a lower tolerance of Jim Crow than their elders and were more disposed to migration inducements as a result.

Unlike previous labor migrations, however, a significant proportion of this migrating population was married and had to make special arrangements for families. "Fearful of abandoning their families for too long while they searched for work, older men needed prior knowledge about which Pittsburgh companies were employing migrants, how much they were paying, and how much of his wages a man could save from a given job." One migrant whose letters are included in Scott's collection detailed his bargaining strategy: "I have a wife and she is a very good cook. She has lots of references from the north and south. Now dear sir if you can send me a ticket so I can come up there and after I get straightened out I will send for my wife." Another tried to bargain for her son stating he was a very good boy and would not cause trouble.

Wives were often left behind and, like women in developing societies today, became responsible for keeping the family together. Women would sell household items, move in with other family members, and take on employment outside the home to support themselves and their children. Sara Brooks, encouraged by her brother to move to Cleveland, saved for the trip. "My brother wanted me to come up there to Cleveland with him, so I started to try to save up what little money I had.... But I saved what I could, and when my sister-in-law came down for me, I had only 18 dollars to my name, and that was maybe a few dollars over enough to come up here. If I'm not mistaken it was about a dollar and 15 cent over."

Family resources were also bolstered by remittances sent home by labor migrants. These monies were used both to sustain the family and as was often noted, "to save the fare." As Jacqueline Jones explains, "A constant flow of letters containing cash and advice between North and South facilitated the gradual migration of whole clans and even villages." Women also negotiated labor contracts through domestic agencies, where northern employers agreed to pay transportation north in exchange for their labor, a system also used to bring women from other parts of the world to the United States.

Migrants were directed to specific industrial centers, industries, and even jobs. Between 1910 and 1920, for example, New York experienced a 66 percent increase in its African-American population; Chicago a 148 percent increase; Detroit a 611 percent increase and Philadelphia a 500 percent increase. By 1920, almost 40 percent of the black population in the North was concentrated in these four cities.

Other demographic shifts accompanied the migration. In 1910, only 10 percent of the African-American population lived in the North. By 1940, it had risen to 22 percent. In 1890, nearly two thirds of all black male laborers worked in agriculture. By 1930, less than half did so. At the same time the number of black schoolteachers more than doubled, the number of black owned businesses tripled and black illiteracy declined from 61 percent to 15 percent.

The great bulk of migrants found their way into manufacturing industries. Gains were most dramatic in the packing houses and steel industries in Chicago. In packing houses, there were 67 blacks employed in 1910 and nearly 3,000 in 1920. In steel, black representation increased from 6 percent in 1910 to 17 percent in 1920. As migrants poured into northern cities, Henry Ford had a better idea. He started a small experiment to see if black workers could be used on the assembly line. According to Amiri Baraka, "the name Ford became synonymous with northern opportunity and a great many blues were written about the Ford company and Ford products."

But opportunity in the North had its price, too. Many of those who followed skilled crafts in the South were barred from them in the North by company policy, union regulations, or craft tradition where there was no union. As Trotter writes, "African-Americans occupied the bottom of Milwaukee's urban economy."

Migrants cited a number of reasons for choosing their places of destination reflecting a combination of economic and non-economic motives. "Carrie J.'s husband moved to Cincinnati, found a job and sent for her," says Gottlieb who quotes this migrant woman's response: "I wrote him a letter back, my older sister had come to Pittsburgh, and I took her

Black Migrants in Search of The Promised Land. (Library of Congress)

as a mother because I had lost my mother. And I wrote him back and said, 'I don't want to stay in Cincinnati. I want to go to Pittsburgh.' Next letter I got, he got a job in Pittsburgh and sent for me."

Once settled, migrants worked very hard to achieve their version of the American dream. One migrant told the Chicago Race Commission, that after coming to Chicago "he worked in a foundry as a moulder's helper until he learned the trade." The migrant explained his strategy to the Commission: "I can quit any time I want to, but the longer I work the more money it is for me, so I usually work eight or nine hours a day. I am planning to educate my girl with the best of them, buy a home before I'm too old, and make life comfortable for my family."

The heyday of the creation of the African-American ghettoes in the northern cities of the United States was in the 1920s, which some have called their "formative years." Generally, before the migration, blacks were dispersed in several areas of the cities in sections small in number. Often they lived in relative obscurity and invisibility. The l920s witnessed a much greater concentration, in Chicago on the South Side, in New York in Harlem, and in both north and south Philadelphia neighborhoods.

The concentration was related to "tangible issues such as competition for better-paying jobs, scarce housing resources, and the struggle for control over the city's government and other institutions." Whites would flee areas when blacks moved in and try, conversely, to keep blacks out. The whole apparatus of government participated in creating *de facto* segregation — under a general assumption that separation was best.

In some cities, migrants were also separated from other elements of the black community. Pittsburgh's "black elite enjoyed a social and organizational life largely separate from that of other blacks in the community." A middle group of earlier migrants to the city from the upper South who had risen out of the black lower class, also sought to distance themselves from the newcomers. "Southern blacks' recent arrival in the city, lack of education, and rural background set them apart from skilled and unskilled wage earners as well as from the elite.

Though some southerners came from cultured urban or landowning rural families, the shortage of housing forced them to live among the unstable lower class, where Pittsburgh blacks easily lost sight of these migrants' backgrounds and aspirations."

Perhaps because of this, African-American migrants in northern cities formed communities that were comprised of many of the same people from the southern communities left behind. And in fact, researchers commented that one would often find blocks of people from the same general area of Georgia, Alabama or North Carolina. "The territory [in Philadelphia] to which most of the Greenwood [South Carolina] refugees came," explains Alan Ballard, "was bounded by Girard Avenue on the south, Susquehanna Avenue on the North, and between Tenth Street on the East and Twelfth Street on the west."

The reactions of migrants to their new surroundings varied greatly. In 1920, James Comer's mother Maggie had this reaction: "To hear people talk about Chicago, as I had heard my sister talk when I was still in Memphis, you'd think that money was dropping off trees. They would say that you just didn't have to want for anything; you could have whatever you want. While still down South, I thought to myself, I'll wait and see what it's like. And, sure enough, East Chicago wasn't what I had been told. It was quite a letdown." By contrast, a migrant from Mississippi explained her preference for Chicago: "Up here you see when I come out on the street I walk on nice smooth pavements. Down home I got to walk home through the mud."

What did not vary was the reaction to their housing conditions. Allan Spear points out that in Chicago "White hostility almost closed the housing market to Negroes and created a physical ghetto." In Milwaukee, observes Trotter, "As blacks lost out in the competitive bid for better jobs, they were forced deeper and deeper into the most dilapidated section of the urban housing market." Gottlieb points out that in Pittsburgh, migrants made invidious comparisons to the South. Said one, "When I first came to Pittsburgh, I really didn't like it, because it was too hilly and it was too smoky. The South is clean. Everything is white, beautiful…Everything was black and smoky…here."

Yet even in the face of discrimination and exclusion, migrants attempted to move forward. Ballard suggests that in Philadelphia "Black building and loan associations flourished during the 1920s — some 36 by 1923 — under the aegis of the churches." Trotter indicates that in Milwaukee there was a 120 percent increase "in the number of blacks engaged in professional, business and clerical occupations" between 1920 and 1930. Maggie's husband bought an undeveloped lot in Chicago for little money, waited for the city to put in streets and built a house. She explained, "We got a contractor from Chicago. There wasn't much to him. He borrowed so much money from us that by the time he got the house up we didn't owe him a dime. But with the help of my husband, when he come home from work, and his brothers and friends, we got this house up." By the time of the depression, they had built two duplexes with two rental properties in addition to their own and "lived well during the Depression, compared to others." As Trotter concludes, "Afro-Americans established all of their larger and most profitable businesses in the wake of migration."

One of the most troubling areas was in the public schools. Blacks were forced to attend classes with much younger students, adding to the assessment that they were of lower intelligence than whites. Yet Maggie was able to exploit the negative aspects of her educational experience, explaining, "They got interested in me when they see I was a great big girl and I didn't know how to read and write. I got quite a bit of help from them. Soon I was able to read and write my name and count to one hundred and so forth." But Maggie's school experiences can not be separated from her other work. After school, she would "have to rush home to cook for the whole family — for her husband, my two brothers, her, and a couple of roomers she had. Then I had to wash clothes until 12 or one o'clock at night."

The industrial jobs were for men only. But married men quickly discovered that the fabulous wages promised by the labor agents were not sufficient to house and clothe their fam-

ilies. Once again, black women were forced into the labor market so that families could survive. As Paula Giddings points out, their "meager incomes not only saved families from utter destruction but provided capital for struggling black businessmen." There were few industrial opportunities for women. When found, they were hung on to with a tenacity. "I'll never work in nobody's kitchen but my own any more," Miss T.S. told the Chicago Race Commission in 1920. "No indeed! That's the one thing that makes me stick to this job." Many others were not as fortunate and were forced into domestic service — what W.E.B. DuBois called "despised labor for a despised population."

Elizabeth Clark Lewis argues that black women transformed domestic service from live-in work to day's work because it fit in better with the life styles adopted in the North. Stated one, "The living-in jobs just kept you running, never stopped. Day or night you'd be getting something for somebody. You'd serve them. It was never a minute's peace. . .But when I went out days on my jobs, I'd get my work done and be gone, I guess that's it. This work had an end." Maggie took on day's work "because what he was making didn't cover what I wanted for a child, like piano and music and books."

Often the institutions formed during this period are seen as having their origins in the segregation migrants found. As Spear suggests, in Chicago blacks responded to white hostility by "trying to build a community that would itself provide all of the advantages of white Chicago." But their institutions were not only created out of reaction to discrimination, but also as a proactive force to build a base of economic power. In many cities, these communities were constructed by a new elite of black leaders, products of the migration, who prospered in the segregated, urban world of the North. In Chicago, these new elites established "Negro businesses, built a Negro political machine, and participated in the organization of Negro social agencies."

Oscar De Priest represents a typical example of a community-based African-American politician. Born in Alabama, in 1889 he came to Chicago to work as a house painter. Over the years, he shifted into a successful real estate business and, in 1904, was elected to the Cook County Commission. During the migration years, De Priest became the first black Alderman and later the first black elected to Congress from the North. In a less dramatic but no less typical instance, "George Bailey, Sr., who had been raised in Greenwood, [Mississippi,] and came to Philadelphia, where he worked at the Campbell Soup Company," and opened two community markets by 1922. His store "became the communications center for many Greenwood blacks. If you were looking for a place to stay, a job, or news of relatives, of if you wanted to send a package home, you went to the store."

The institutional forms that accompanied migration were also unique to their new circumstances. Hine argues that the forces of "white racism, black self-help initiatives and white philanthropic largesse" combined at the turn of the century to produce a "black hospital movement, to improve the system of health care delivery for blacks." By the mid 1920s, there were over 200 black hospitals and over 25 nursing schools in the country. In Chicago, for example, Spear writes of the experiences of Provident Hospital that was started in 1890 by Dr. Williams as the first integrated, teaching hospital in the United States. Created because of the discrimination black doctors and nurses found in white hospitals, under Williams' leadership, Provident's goal of integration was of paramount importance. With financial support from the white philanthropic community, at the turn of the century it boasted both a black and white medical staff and black and white patients.

By 1917, however, the influx of migrants and the increasing segregation, had helped to transform the institution into an all-black one. Its new head George Cleveland Hall, according to Hine, straddled two ideological camps within the black community supporting "the accommodationist philosophy, accepting racial segregation as but a temporary trade-off, one of many in the continuous struggle for full equality and integration," and, most importantly, striving toward the ultimate goal of achieving economic independence.

Under the banner of black self-help, a number of social service organizations were founded specifically to aid migrants and, in general, to uplift the community from inside. Notable in Chicago was the Ida B. Wells Negro Fellowship organization, and the Wabash Avenue Y's. Many northern churches also established "employment bureaus, recreation centers and welfare agencies," says Kennedy, "in order to meet the complex needs of the colored people in their new environment." Again, the point of these organizations was not merely to "help" but to establish an economic foundation.

Even the "culturally transformed New Negro" may be seen in a slightly different light when economic motivations are included. Poet Amiri Baraka (born LeRoi Jones) argues that significant cultural transformations accompanied the new community. Baraka writes, "the significant idea is that the North now represented a place where they could begin again, this time, perhaps, on more human footing." Music, particularly the classic urban blues, became an important expression of that transformation. One of the first commercial recordings by a black artist was done by Mamie Smith, a singer from Cincinnati with "heavy voice, heavy hips, a light complexion and wavy brown hair." Her recording "Crazy Blues" sold "tens of thousands of copies in Harlem and elsewhere." Its words — "I can't sleep at night. I can't eat a bite. Cause the man I love, He didn't treat me right" — captured a despair that cut across ethnic and racial lines. But it also ushered in an era of production of "race records," a recognition on the part of the recording industry that a significant market existed within the black community. Race records quickly became big business. Baraka explains the situation: "Friday nights after work in those cold gray Jordans of the North, Negro working men lined up outside record stores to get the new blues, and as the money rolled in, the population of America, as shown on sales prognostication charts in the offices of big American industry, went up by one-tenth." Mamie Smith, who earned nearly $100,000 in recording royalties, is said to have "made so much money she never really counted it."

Some expressed alarm at the new music. A federal investigator was shocked that migrants enjoyed such suggestive pieces as "He May Be Your Man, But He Comes To See Me Sometimes.'" But Patricia Hill Collins finds that a new consciousness emerged with the music. "In contrast to the ingenues of most white popular music of the same period," classic blues singers of the 1920s sang of mature, sexual, and independent women.

Richard Wright saw a further difference between North and South arguing that southern music "carried a strain of other-worldly yearning which people called 'spiritual;' but now our blues, jazz, swing, and boogie-woogie are our 'spirituals' of the city pavements, our longing for freedom and opportunity, an expression of our bewilderment and despair in a world whose meaning eludes us. Our thirst for the sensual is poured out in jazz; the tension of our brittle lives is given forth in swing; and our nervousness and exhaustion are pounded out in the swift tempo of boogie-woogie."

Migrants lived in a very restricted, economic arena. To survive, they rather quickly had to find a job and make money. This reality influenced all of their decision-making. The world they shaped, as a result, was very pragmatic, limited, and ever-changing. Contemporary observers, interviewing migrants of the Great Migration, frequently commented on what they called their "economic motivations." Often they would feed migrants questions about southern exploitation or freedom and liberty, only to get the response, "I don't care nothing about that."

Recent scholars have challenged these characterizations suggesting that observers intentionally ignored important non-economic motivations. Grossman argues, for example, "Charles Johnson has a strategic reason to highlight economic motivations. Writing as a National Urban League official, the young black sociologist did not want northern employers to think of migrants as impulsive or irrational."

Surveys of letters to newspapers, organizations, families and friends all suggest, on the other hand, that migrants themselves highlighted economic concerns with much greater frequency than anything else. Even when they talked of other things, they did so in an economic context:

I am the mother of 8 children 25 years old and I want to get out of this dog hold because I dont know what I am raising them up for in this place and I want to go to Chicago where I know they will be raised and my husband crazy to get there because he know he can get more to raise his children.

The decision to leave was no more complicated than this. Migrants of the Great Migration shared with many who had come before and with many more who would come after a simple dream, to make it. To ignore this dream, or to embellish it with complex passions, trivializes the experience.

Table 8.2

Percentage of U.S. Population in Urban Areas, 1900-1940

	1900	1920	1940
North			
Black	70	76	90
White	51	62	65
South			
Black	17	25	35
White	19	30	36
United States			
Black	23	35	49
White	43	53	58

From: Frazier, **The Negro in the United States,** ***p. 195***

Table 8.3

Cities with an African-American Population over 100,000 in 1940

	1940	1920	1900
North			
New York	458,444	152,467	60,666
Chicago	277,731	109,458	30,150
Philadelphia	250,880	134,229	60,613
Detroit	149,119	40,838	4,111
Border			
Washington	187,266	109,966	86,702
Baltimore	165,843	108,322	79,258
St. Louis	108,765	69,854	35,516
South			
New Orleans	149,034	100,930	77,714
Memphis	121,498	61,181	49,910
Birmingham	108,938	70,230	16,575
Atlanta	104,533	62,796	35,729

From: Frazier, **The Negro in the United States,** ***p. 230***

Bibliography

Ballard, Allan. *The Education of Black Folk: the Afro-American Struggle for Knowledge in White America.* New York: Harper, 1973.

Baraka, Amiri. *Blues People: Negro Music in White America.* New York: Morrow, 1963.

Clark-Lewis, Elizabeth. *Living in, Living out: African American domestics in Washington, D.C., 1910-1940.* Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, P, 1994.

Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* New York: Routledge, 1991.

Comer, James. *Maggie's American Dream: The Life and Times of a Black Family.* New York: New American Library, 1988.

Giddings, Paula. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America.* New York: Morrow, 1984.

Gottlieb, Peter. *Making Their Own Way: Southern Blacks' Migration to Pittsburgh, 1916-1930.* Urbana, U of Illinois P, 1987.

Grossman, James R. *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1989.

Henri, Florette. *Black Migration: Movement North, 1900-1920.* Garden City, NY: Anchor, 1975.

Hine, Darlene Clark, ed. *Black Women in American History, from Colonial Times through the Nineteenth Century*. 4 vols. Brooklyn: NY: Carlson, 1990.

—— *Black Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia.* 2 vols. Brooklyn, NY: Carlson, 1993.

Jones, Jacqueline. *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present.* New York: Basic, 1985.

Kennedy, Louise. *The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward: Effects of Recent Migration to Northern Centers.* New York: AMS, 1968.

Levine, Lawrence W. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom.* New York: Oxford UP, 1977.

Marable, Manning. *Black American Politics: From the Washington Marches to Jesse Jackson.* London: Verso P, 1985.

—— "Africa, Black America Connect on Apartheid." *The Witness.* (1985).

Marks, Carole. *Farewell — We're Good and Gone: the Great Black Migration.* Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989.

Painter, Nell Irvin. *The Narrative of Hosea Hudson, His Life as a Negro Communist in the South.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1979.

Robinson, Armstead, and Patricia Sullivan. *New Directions in Civil Rights Studies.* Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1991.

Scott, Emmett J. *Negro Migration During the War.* New York: Oxford UP, 1920.

Spear, Allan. Black Chicago: *The Making of a Negro Ghetto, 1890-1920.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1967.

Trotter, Joseph. Black Milwaukee: *The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915-1945.* Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1985.

Wright, Gavin. *Old South, New South: Revolution in the Southern Economy since the Civil War.* New York: Basic, 1986.

Chapter Nine

From Booker T. until after Malcolm X: Black Political Thought, 1895-1995

Wilson J. Moses

On February 20, 1895, Frederick Douglass, orator, statesman, universal reformer, and reputed spokesman of black America, returned from a speaking engagement to his Washington, D.C. home, and, as he often did, began to entertain his wife with a humorous reenactment of the day's events. Midway through his performance, Douglass dropped to his knees, gasping for breath; Helen Pitts Douglass suddenly realized, to her alarm, that this time he was not acting. Douglass expired on the parlor floor, within minutes, and with him passed an era in the struggle for African-American intellectual leadership. Rising to national prominence in the year of Douglass's death was Booker T. Washington, the new symbolic speaker for black America, who was fated to be the tortured, lonely, captain of the foundering ship of reconstruction.

The end of the 19th century was a dismal period in the history of black Americans, as most of the gains they had made as a result of emancipation and post-war Reconstruction seemed to be slipping away. At the end of the War, Northern philanthropists and liberals had offered substantial assistance to block the American quest for full participation in American life. By the turn of the century, however, it was clear that black citizenship was to be sacrificed to the ideal of white national unity. White Americans were fatigued after the great internecine struggle, and the passion for social reform was overwhelmed by the materialism of the nation's response to industrialism. Rayford W. Logan characterized the period as one of "betrayal" and as "the nadir" of African-American history. John Hope Franklin has characterized the spirit of the times with the term, "counter-reconstruction."

Booker T. Washington's ideology was shaped largely by his childhood experiences, first in slavery, then in the salt mines and coal mines of Malden, West Virginia. He was influenced profoundly by the Yankee values of Viola Ruffner, for whom, at the age of 15, he went to work as a house boy. Washington later credited Ruffner with teaching him the practical usefulness of honesty, industry, thrift, and abstinence that later figured in his educational and political philosophy. In 1872, he worked his way to Hampton, Virginia, travelling most of the way on foot. There, he eventually graduated with honors from the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute headed by Samuel Chapman Armstrong. During several months at the Wayland Seminary in Washington, D.C., he was exposed to the South's new black middle class, with their crass materialism and petty snobbishness. The experience contributed to his life-long hostility towards the black bourgeoisie. He wished that "by some power of magic," he might "remove the great bulk of these people into the country districts and plant them upon the soil." Washington returned to Malden, where he taught school for two years. He then returned to Hampton, were he gained

Booker T. Washington. (Library of Congress)

two additional years of teaching experience. In 1881, he was offered a position in Alabama, where he founded the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute.

Patient as a spider, Washington began to construct a network of power and influence, consciously maneuvering himself into the position of spokesman for black America. Then, on September 18, 1895, seven months after the death of Douglass, he capitalized on an opportunity to address the Atlanta and Cotton States Exposition. With stunning brilliance, Washington used the occasion to exploit the white South's legend of the contented slave, which he transformed into a myth of black loyalty during the Civil War. He advised white-controlled business and industry to entrust its destiny to the loyal black population, saying, "Cast down your bucket…among

the eight millions of Negroes whose habits you know, whose fidelity and love you have tested in days when to have proved treacherous meant the ruin of your firesides." He also exploited the South's xenophobia with respect to European emigrants, promising a loyalty "that no foreigner can approach," and casting suspicion on those "of foreign birth and strange tongue and habits." Washington also called on black Americans to cast down their buckets "in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions."

Contrary to popular belief, Washington's goal was never to consign black Americans to menial occupations, but rather to develop a stratified society, in which the masses would be prosperous farmers and handworkers, led by a managerial elite of college trained technocrats. He was a missionary to the children of slavery, preaching the "Gospel of Wealth," the "Protestant Ethic," and family values. Tuskegee established extension programs among the agrarian masses, instructing them in such useful skills as crop rotation, animal husbandry, personal hygiene, and the management of household finances. Washington was contemptuous of education that was not aimed at the creation of material wealth, and believed that persons of marginal ability who "wasted" their time studying Greek and Latin were assuring their own economic failure. Tuskegee, nonetheless, had a solid liberal arts curriculum, and students were provided the basic elements of cultural literacy, economics, history, and the arts of communication. The better graduates were encouraged to undertake advanced studies at such leading northern universities as Harvard and Cornell.

The "Wizard of Tuskegee" was a Renaissance man — in the Machiavellian sense. Ruthless and cunning, he sought to establish himself as supreme "ward boss" of black America. In the presence of white power, he was a fox, stealthy, covert, and self obscuring, but, in his dealings with other black leaders, he was a lion, who brooked no opposition. The historian, Louis Harlan treats Washington as a many-layered persona, inscrutable to the core, and perhaps lacking in substance. Others view him as a complex individual, whose powerful personality left an indelible impact on black American ideology. One need not engage in the sentimentalism promoted by some of Washington's earlier biographers to appreciate the subtlety, as well as the limitations, of his philosophy.

Washington's autobiography, *Up From Slavery*, was a reminder to his audience that, like Frederick Douglass, he was a former slave. It also gave him a place within the broader tradition of the American self-made man, and he was sometimes compared to Benjamin Franklin, the philosopher of Yankee enterprise. He encouraged practicality in religion, as in all other things, and ridiculed the other-worldly emotionalism of untrained rural preachers. He was equally unimpressed with the secular enthusiasms of the black masses, and their putative love for expensive gew-gaws and frivolous ostentation. As a preacher of the Gospel of Wealth, Washington seemed, in the mind of W.E.B. Du Bois, to have assimilated far too thoroughly the "speech and thought of triumphant commercialism, and the ideals of material prosperity." And yet it must be said in Washington's defense that the capitalism Washington advocated was not the cloying excess of the gilded age, but the creative Yankee enterprise represented in the philosophy of Andrew Carnegie, a pragmatic industrialist and socially-minded entrepreneur.

In a sense, Washington was a "materialist," an economic determinist, who believed that the progress of black Americans would be best assured by establishing a solid base in the capitalist system. On the other hand, he held the "idealist" belief that the foundation of economic progress must be imbedded in moral values. Asserting that economic success could never be achieved by a people who retained the habits of slavery, he set out to eradicate the vestiges of slave culture that he perceived among the African-American masses. He believed that exposure to Anglo-Protestant civilization was a providential by-product of the evil of slavery. Protestantism, properly controlled, could be a source of industrial values and ultimate economic strength. He justified his strategy of temporarily accepting political disfranchisement and working towards economic and industrial power in terms of the exigencies of the times.

Indeed, one may ask if anything more could have been accomplished by a rhetoric of militancy. Washington realistically appreciated that the American civilization of the late 19th century was hostile to the presence or black persons in politics. This was the reason for his insistence that the best way for black men and women to get ahead was to ignore politics for a season, and to concentrate on business enterprise.

Life was not so simple, in the view of Ida B. Wells, one of Washington's severest critics. Wells, the most militant black American leader of the period, argued that the disabilities of black Americans had little to do with any failure to master the values of contemporary capitalism. She publicized the lynching in Memphis of three black businessmen whose crime had been to establish a successful grocery store at a convenient point on the streetcar line, thereby exploiting an opportunity that white men had lacked the vision to seize. Wells disputed the white southern canard that lynching was a response to unmentionable crimes against white women. She insisted that lynching was simply one of the forms of political and economic terrorism, perpetrated, in many cases, against the most upstanding and enterprising class of black Americans. Ironically, the three Memphis citizens were punished, not for some form of political activism, but for practicing exactly the doctrines that Booker T. Washington preached.

In 1895, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin convened a meeting of black women's clubs in Boston to form the National Federation of Afro-American Women (NFAAW). Ruffin was strongly influenced by Ida B. Wells' agitation against lynching, and by the slanders against black men and women perpetrated in the press. She also sided with Wells in her opposition to Booker T. Washington. Ruffin was the product of an interracial marriage, and an avowed integrationist, whose afternoon teas in Boston featured the social mingling of Harvard and Radcliffe students across racial lines and sexual barriers. Josephine Ruffin absolutely rejected Washington's pronouncement that "in all things purely social," blacks and whites could be "as separate as the fingers of the hand," since she was aware that few elements of human affairs are purely social. Nonetheless, Margaret Murray Washington, the wife of Booker T., was elected president of the NFAAW. Elected to chairmanship of the executive board was Victoria Earle Matthews, who was a Washington admirer, although a vocal opponent of lynching.

In the autumn of 1895, there was a meeting of Women's clubs in connection with the Atlanta Exposition, which Josephine Ruffin did not attend. Considerable secret friction arose over the issue of Ida B. Wells' denunciations of Francis Willard, a white feminist, known for racist statements, but defended, nonetheless by Mary Church Terrell. The following year,(1896) when the NFAAW met in Washington, D.C., it merged with the Colored Women's League of Washington, D.C., to become the National Association of Colored Women, and Mary Church Terrell, a Tuskegee supporter became the first national president in 1897. Margaret Murray Washington, who always identified herself as Mrs. Booker T. Washington, was elected Chairman of the Executive Board. From that point on, it was clear that the NACW was to be under the control of the Tuskegee forces, and that Ida B. Wells and Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin were to be relegated to minor roles in the organization.

Further rumblings of protest about Washington's leadership were heard in 1897, when the venerable Alexander Crummell (1819-1898) organized the American Negro Academy. According to its constitution, the Academy was to be "an organization of Authors, Scholars, Artists, and those distinguished in other walks of life, men of African descent, for the promotion of Letters, Science, and Art." Crummell delivered two addresses at the first convention of the Academy: "Civilization, the Primal Need of the Race" carried an implicit criticism of Washington's gospel of wealth and materialism, and "The Attitude of the American Mind Toward the Negro Intellect," addressed the need for scholarly vindication of the abilities of African Americans.

Crummell's ideology has been called "civilizationism," a belief in the "uplift" and "redemption" of Africa and all her scattered peoples, both in religious and secular terms. He

called for a leadership elite, educated in the liberal arts, but willing to descend from the clouds atop Parnassus, and to meet the "primal need of the race," by bestowing the blessings of "civilization," on the untutored masses. It was neither "property nor money, nor station, nor office, nor lineage," that gave a people greatness and vitality, he argued, but their absorption in "large, majestic, and abiding things." Thus, the need to encourage the production of "letters, literature, science, philosophy, poetry, sculpture, architecture, yea all the arts." The by-laws of the Academy included the injunction that all meetings would be opened with prayer.

From its founding in 1897 until its demise in 1928, the American Negro Academy published 22 occasional papers, written by its members, in vindication of the race. Its first publication, contributed by Kelly Miller, professor of Mathematics at Howard University, was representative. Miller's paper was a scathing review of Frederick L. Hoffman's *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro,* a study sponsored by the American Economic Association. The thesis behind the work was an old one, namely that slavery was the natural state of the black race. Hoffman had marshalled statistics to demonstrate that since emancipation the health and morals of black Americans had dramatically deteriorated. The cause of this deterioration was "not [in] the conditions of life but in the race traits and tendencies" of the black race, namely its mental, physical, and moral inferiority. Furthermore, these "traits and tendencies must in the end cause the extinction of the race." Miller's purpose was to refute the arguments of Hoffman by means of systematic analysis and introduction of statistical evidence. In his final paragraphs, Miller invoked the argument that "God is the controlling factor in human affairs," and his belief that, "if the Negro… will conform his life to the moral and sanitary laws," the social evils that Hoffman noted would be overcome.

Other members of the Academy included Francis J. (Frank) Grimké, a Presbyterian minister and prolific scholar whose sermons and addresses were posthumously published in 1942, and Archibald Grimké, Frank's brother, also a successful author who wrote seven of the Academy's occasional papers, biographies of William Lloyd Garrison and Charles Sumner, and numerous newspaper and magazine articles. Archibald Grimké also published his own newspaper, *The Hub*, in Boston. John W. Cromwell, who contributed the eighth occasional paper, "The Early Negro Convention Movement," was the author of *The Negro In American History*, as well as editor of *The People's Advocate.* Theophilus G. Steward, a retired army chaplain, selected military themes for his two occasional papers. One of them dealt with black soldiers in the American Revolution and the other described the Haitian Revolution. William S. Scarborough, a professor of Classics at Wilberforce University, used an occasional paper to offer instruction on "The Educated Negro and His Mission."

The name of W.E.B. Du Bois became almost identical with the mission of the educated Negro, when he coined the term, "Talented Tenth." Du Bois had been born into genteel poverty in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in 1868, but his native intellect and dogged determination had won him scholarships to Fisk and Harvard Universities, and the University of Berlin. Within a week of Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address, Du Bois had written to congratulate the Wizard for his "phenomenal success at Atlanta," calling it "a word fitly spoken." Over the next eight years, however, Du Bois began to disagree publicly with Washington. In 1903 he published *The Souls of Black Folk,* with its two chapters on black leadership, "Of Booker T. Washington," and "Of Alexander Crummell."

Du Bois's attacks on Washington's policies of accommodation were institutionalized in the Niagara Movement (1905-1909), where he was joined by William Monroe Trotter, publisher of the *Boston Guardian.* Trotter and Du Bois were disturbed by the same elements of Washington's public demeanor that annoyed Ida B. Wells. Not only did they find him needlessly servile, but, justifiably, they felt threatened by his covert political manipulations, which often sabotaged political initiatives or ruined careers. The clash between Washington and Du Bois was due partially to a conflict of personalities and leadership styles, partially to conflict-

ing political ambitions. Nonetheless, although Du Bois advocated a more militant posture in the struggle for civil rights than did Washington, he recognized the validity of Washington's call for industry, thrift, and the building of African-American institutions.

Du Bois also recognized the importance of nurturing a distinctly African-American culture and tradition. Influenced, no doubt, by his German training and the concept of *Volksgeist* (soul of the folk, or spirit of the people) that dominated much of German cultural nationalism, he was the first American intellectual to attempt a theory of African-American culture rooted in the folkways of the masses. His "scientific" paper read before the American Negro Academy in 1897, "The Conservation of Races," was flamboyant and mystical, as was most racial theory of the time, and it gave no indication of the proletarian romanticism that would affect his later work. *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) was, on the other hand, a poetic rhapsody, largely in celebration of black *Volksgeist* or the spirit of African-American peasant culture.

Du Bois was elected second president of the American Negro Academy, but with the exception of "The Conservation of Races," his efforts at race vindication were not published in the occasional papers. At the time of the Academy's founding, Du Bois was already concluding *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), a pioneering work in the field of American sociology. He now proposed a long-term, systematic project to study the life and culture of African Americans. In 1897 Du Bois became professor of economics and history at Atlanta University and began to devote the greater part of his energies to what he called "The Laboratory in Sociology at Atlanta." He inaugurated the Atlanta University Studies, a project aimed at gathering information and publishing a series of documents with such titles as *Morality Among Negroes in Cities, The Negro in Business, The Negro Church,* and *The Negro American Family.*

As intimated earlier, not every educated African American was hostile to Tuskegee policy. Mary Church Terrell, for example, represented the complex relations between Booker T. Washington and the Talented Tenth. She was the daughter of Robert Church, a black entrepreneur who had made his fortune in Memphis real estate, much of it on the notorious Beale Street. He provided Mary with an education at Antioch and Oberlin Colleges, and afterwards sent her to travel and study in Europe. In 1919 she addressed the Quinquennial International Peace Conference in Zurich, delivering her speech in English, French, and German. She sided with Washington in his conflict with Du Bois, although her admiration for Washington was not without qualification, and she found his "darky stories" distasteful. Nonetheless, whenever she heard criticisms of Washington's policies, Terrell's response was, "But, have you seen Tuskegee?"

Robert Herberton Terrell, who was Mary Church Terrell's husband, and Richard T. Greener were two Harvard graduates who found cooperation with Booker T. Washington congenial. Francis J. Grimké, Victoria Earle Matthews, and T. Thomas Fortune, editor of the *New York Age,* were also supporters of Washington from the Talented Tenth, and occasionally practiced a militancy that Washington eschewed. Kelly Miller made clear in his 1908 work, *Radicals and Conservatives,* that it was impossible to reduce black thought at the dawn of the new century to the issue of degrees of militancy in race relations. Miller asserted that Washington had undergone tremendous growth as a result of "adverse criticism, and the growing sense of responsibility." "Even those who continue to challenge his primacy confess that they are opposing the Washington of long ago rather than the Washington of to-day," he wrote.

There is an unfortunate tendency to reduce black leadership of this period, 1895-1915, to a succession of giants, from Douglass to Washington to Du Bois. Even worse, Du Bois is seen as the unchallenged intellectual colossus of black America, standing head and shoulders above all his contemporaries. This approach, which has its roots in the 19th century deification of Frederick Douglass, is condescending and false. Some black writers and intellectuals have been supremely successful at grabbing publicity, but this does not necessarily mean that they stand head and shoulders above their contemporaries. Washington, to his credit, never publicized himself as the prime intellectual leader, and in any case, by the time of his death in

W.E.B. DuBois. (Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.)

1915, a remarkably large number of black Americans might have been identified as intellectuals of comparable or greater distinction. Du Bois was a man of exceptional genius, and the best publicized black thinker of his day on racial issues, but he was not an unchallenged intellectual titan, categorically superior to all his contemporaries. Mary Church Terrell was clear-sighted enough to see this, and she was known to tease Du Bois in public, figuratively pulling his nose, when she addressed him as "Willie."

Understandably then, some scholars have been dissatisfied with the tendency to discuss African-American thought during this period solely in terms of the Washington-Du Bois conflict. A much neglected strain in African-American thought immediately preceding the First World War was the so-called "African Movement," represented by several churchmen during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. William H. Heard, a Bishop of the African Methodist

Episcopal (AME) Church, toured the Western Coast of the continent, and worked to establish his church in South Africa. AME Bishop Henry McNeal Turner had been an advocate of black resettlement in Africa during the Civil War, and continued to advocate African migration until his death in 1915. Rev. Orishatukeh Faduma, born W. J. Davies of Yoruba parents in Barbados, was a member of the American Negro Academy, and principal of the Peabody Academy of North Carolina. He became involved with a movement headed by Alfred C. Sam, a lesser chief of the Akan people of Gold Coast, West Africa, which attempted, unsuccessfully, to establish a steamship line between the United States and Africa.

Far more important to most black intellectuals than back-to-Africa movements was the movement called Pan-Africanism. Alexander Walters, a Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church joined with Trinidad Barrister, Sylvester Williams, Anna Julia Cooper, and W.E.B. Du Bois to organize a Pan-African Conference in London in 1900. The variety of Pan-Africanism represented in this movement was concerned primarily with the universal defense of people of African descent from the effects of slavery, colonialism, and racial prejudice. Its 19th century antecedents could be seen in such publications as David Walker's *Appeal…with a Preamble to the Colored Citizens of the World* (1829) and the *Constitution of the African Civilization Society* (1861). The latter document expressed a devotion to the redemption of Africa, as well as "the welfare of her children in all lands."

Pan-Africanism in the United States was influenced by Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912), a Liberian scholar of West Indian origins. Blyden's writings and periodic visits to the United States had a crucial influence on African-American intellectual life. He was associated with two important strains in African-American thought, "vindicationism" and "Ethiopianism." Vindicationism was a tradition that sought to demonstrate the humanity of African peoples by proving their contributions to world history, through the civilizations of ancient Egypt and the "blameless Ethiopians." These historical references to Ethiopia must be distinguished from "Ethiopianism," the religious movement for the conversion and civilization of Africa, which was a teleology based on the Biblical passage, "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch forth her hands unto God." Blyden's early ideas were clearly buttressed by his Christian training and by his belief that Africa must be redeemed, both spiritually and materially. His historical researches and Biblical interpretations led him to the belief that the African race had a noble past and a glorious destiny.

Blyden was among the progenitors of the "Afrocentric" school, as it was later called, with his assertion that the peoples and civilization of ancient Egypt were organically related to the population of the entire African continent. Although Blyden learned many African languages and sought to establish African Studies in the University of Liberia, he was unable to overcome the civilizationism of his generation. In one of his later works, *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race,* he expressed the belief that traditional African culture and religion must give way before the influences of Christianity and/or Islam. He viewed both of these missionary religions as more conducive to material progress than the religions of the various indigenous ethnic groups.

Standing in sharp contrast to the ideology of "civilizationism" in the early 20th century was the new movement towards "cultural relativism." Civilizationism represented the view that history was an evolutionary climb from barbarism to progressively higher forms of social, intellectual, and behavioral norms. African civilizationists were future oriented, and hoped to produce a sterling civilization in Africa as a vindication of the abilities of the African race. These "vindicationists" were also determined to prove that black folk were the progenitors of civilization in ancient times, and that black individuals had made significant contributions to human progress throughout history.

Thus, civilizationism, classical black nationalism, and talented tenth doctrine represented a concern for both the past and the future. Civilizationists believed that the vindication of the African races must also involve "uplifting" the masses of black people to a contempo-

rary level of progressive civilization. In the 19th century, theories of black progress and civilization were linked to Christian missionary efforts. In the 20th century, civilizationism sometimes took the form of Marxism; at other times, it adopted the rhetoric of laissez faire capitalism and constitutional democracy. Nonetheless, Christianity, Marxism, and bourgeois democracy all assumed the existence of universal truths, which had been "discovered, not devised," by Europeans, and therefore could not be rightfully appropriated by them. The truths of human progress, currently arrogated to themselves by white supremacists, were just as properly the cultural property of Africans, who should busy themselves with reclaiming their legitimate heritage.

Cultural relativism in the writings of white American scholars, particularly Franz Boas and his student Melville Herskovits was a useful invention, providing black scholars with a new means of racial vindication. Hitherto, the defense of Africa had relied almost exclusively on the relationship of African culture to Egypt. Now, it became possible to defend West Africa, the historic homeland of African Americans, on its own terms. Ironically, the "folkways" theory of social Darwinist, William Graham Sumner, provided an additional building block for the theory of cultural relativism. The theory allowed black Americans to argue that African manners and customs were intelligent adaptations to the conditions of life in Africa, rather than evidence of genetic or moral inferiority. Furthermore, relativity theory allowed social scientists to achieve an aesthetic enjoyment of the arts and folklore of indigenous African peoples.

By the 1920s, many intellectuals were abandoning monistic civilizationism to adopt the emerging ideologies of "cultural pluralism" and "cultural relativism." Alain Locke understood correctly that cultural pluralism could be used to buttress democratic and egalitarian ideas, and to nurture a tolerance and appreciation for the differences between peoples. What Locke and his cohorts seemed to forget was that 19th century intellectuals had argued no less convincingly for a religious universalism as the basis of democracy and egalitarianism. There can be no denying that the political implications of cultural pluralism, as Locke articulated them, were generous and humane. At the same time it should be recalled that cultural pluralism flourished in the black community *after* white economic and intellectual elites had become interested in jazz, and had begun to invest heavily in African modes of art, represented in the primitivism of Modigliani, Picasso, and the German expressionists.

Cultural relativism did have the positive effect of transforming the scholarly treatment of Africa. The relativistic thrust of social science made the study of African culture both fashionable and respectable in intellectual circles of Europe and North America. Simultaneous with the rise of cultural relativism in America, the researches of the German scholar, Leo Frobenius, had a strong influence on W.E.B. Du Bois and other African-American intellectuals. Frobenius's observations, when placed within the conceptual frameworks of Boas, provided an intellectual basis for the appreciation of those cultures of sub-Saharan Africa that had never produced a pyramid.

Carter G. Woodson made contributions to the new African studies when, in 1915, he founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH). The following year, Woodson founded the *Journal of Negro History* (JNH), a "gray-cover" journal whose sedate appearance reflected the scholarly intentions of its author, but the ASNLH was a grass-roots organization, based in local Negro History Chapters. Unlike the American Historical Association, it was not based in colleges and Universities. Although *JNH* published articles on African history, ancient and modern, Woodson was not obsessed with the African past or with Ethiopian glories. Woodson followed in the tradition of 19th century historians, William Wells Brown and George Washington Williams, in that his efforts aimed at a fair and factual presentation of the role of black citizens in the history of the United States.

Woodson, like Du Bois, remained somewhat within the civilizationist tradition, of vindicationism, that sought to justify the African race in terms of pyramid building. Both men

sought increasingly, however, to find elements of worth in traditional West African cultures. They were joined by a number of other Negro history pioneers in the United States during the first three decades of the 20th century. One of these was William H. Ferris, a member of the American Negro Academy, who published *The African Abroad*, a wide ranging collection of essays treating African, Caribbean, and African-American history. Other vindicationists who began to move away from a strict monistic civilizationism were Arthur A. Schomburg, and John E. Bruce, co-founders of the Negro Society for Historical Research, in 1911.

At the same time black historians appealed to a mass readership with their biographical sketches of famous "Negro" individuals who were commonly thought of as white, realizing that American society arbitrarily broadened or narrowed its definition of "Negro" in accord with local custom or legal caprice. An individual might, therefore, legally change his or her race simply by stepping across a state line, or moving to a new neighborhood. The vindicationist agenda would not have come into existence outside of a society dominated by the social and legal codes of racial segregation. Many of the persons these identified as black in these popular biographies were of mixed racial ancestry, as, for example, Alexander Pushkin and Alexander Dumas. The vindicationists pointed out that certain of Egypt's pharaohs would have had difficulty obtaining hotel or travel accommodations in the United States during the 1920s.

Joel Augustus Rogers, the most flamboyant representative of this popular vindicationist school, "discovered" the suppressed black ancestry of numerous historical figures, including, Hannibal, Cleopatra, Ludwig Von Beethoven, Johann Strauss, Abraham Lincoln, and four other presidents of the United States. The point of Rogers' raciological detective work was that many famous persons might easily have been classified as black if certain ambiguities in their ancestry had been known and acted upon. Rogers' efforts were clearly intended to point up the irrationality and inconsistency of racial classification, but the ironic tone that permeates his work has been lost on many of his readers.

Cultural relativism and pluralism continued to gain strength among academically trained intellectuals like Alain Locke, a Rhodes scholar and Harvard Ph.D., who took a skeptical and ambivalent view of the universalist, monistic concept of civilization. His anthology, *The New Negro,* has come to be seen as the standard introduction to the "Harlem Renaissance," or, as others prefer to call it, the "Negro Renaissance," or "New Negro Movement." The period is also sometimes referred to as the "Jazz Age," because it seemed to be paced to the erotic rhythms of hot jazz and "gut bucket" blues. The term "jazz" had sexual connotations and represented a strident flouting of repressive bourgeois sexual morality in an age that was flushed with the excitement of having discovered Freud. This spirit was reflected in such novels as Claude McKay's *Home to Harlem,* Jessie Fauset's *Plum Bun,* and Wallace Thurman's *Infants of the Spring.*

One should recognize, however, that the cultural symbolism of Jazz and Blues are not sufficient metaphors to represent the complexities of black artistic and intellectual culture during this period. As we have seen, literate culture during this era depended upon prior developments that were alien to the exoticism and eroticism at that time associated with jazz or blues culture. The cultural relativism represented by Locke and the pulsing sensuality reflected in some of the contents of *The New Negro* were legitimate aspects of black artistic and intellectual life during the era. The counter-tendencies represented by the neo-Blydenism of Marcus Garvey were equally legitimate.

The poet and critic, Sterling Brown, although much involved in developments of the period was uncomfortable with the term, "Negro Renaissance."

> …the five or eight years generally allotted are short for the life-span of any "renaissance." The New Negro is not to me a group of writers centered in Harlem during the second half of the twenties. Most of the writers were not Harlemites; much of the best

> writing was not about Harlem, which was the show-window, the cashier's till, but no more Negro America than New York is America. The New Negro movement had temporal roots in the past and spatial roots elsewhere in America and the term has validity, it seems to me, only when considered to be a continuing tradition.

Sterling Brown believed, furthermore, that Jazz Age stereotypes were nothing but a revitalization of old plantation darky myths. He expressed his distaste for the black writers and intellectuals who "helped to make a cult of Harlem [and] set up their own Bohemia, sharing in the nation-wide rebellion from family, church, small town, and business civilization… grafting primitivism on decadence." Locke, for his part, warned that "too many of our younger writers…are pot-plants seeking a forced growth according to the exotic tastes of a pampered and decadent public." Locke's description of black culture in terms of hot-house exoticism was an obvious borrowing from the language of Alexander Crummell, half a century earlier. Locke was by no means a cultural conservative or a literary traditionalist. He supported the work of young modernist intellectuals. At the same time he had some misgivings with respect to the exotic stereotype. His ambivalence was shared by other black modernists, including Langston Hughes, Jessie Fauset, Wallace Thurman, and James Weldon Johnson.

E. Franklin Frazier, a black sociologist of Marxist leanings, offered even more stringent criticism, when he accused the Harlem literati of chasing the swamp lights of Bohemia. They had been too easily impressed by the white intellectual attack on bourgeois values, and too ready in their acceptance of the Marxist critique of the capitalist class. Black folk in America needed to nurture a capitalist class, argued Frazier, for the black businessman was far more independent in spirit than were the black artists who parroted proletarian slogans. At this early stage in his career, Frazier was a champion of the black bourgeoisie, which he hoped would soon produce a true capitalist class, a necessary phase in the evolutionary development of an independent intellectual class, according to his Marxist theory of history.

A strain of bourgeois capitalist culture that would seem to have met Frazier's requirements was embodied in the movement of Marcus Garvey, a flamboyant Jamaican. Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) arose in Harlem during the First World War, and flourished until his imprisonment in 1925 and deportation in 1927. By 1919 Garvey had built a political movement based on a revitalization of the Pan-African ideology that had flourished in the generation of Blyden and Crummell, although he fiercely denied any affinity to Chief Sam. Marcus Garvey's arrogant and theatrical temperament was reflected in the quarrelsome nature of the UNIA, evident in the month long convention of August, 1923. Garvey was caught up in contradictions between a reverence for the past and a fascination with modernity. As a result, he was torn between a desire to identify himself with tradition and a contradictory impulse to present himself as a total innovator. The UNIA program was, however, more closely associated with the bourgeois aspirations of the working class than with the *avant garde* "modernism" of marginalized Jazz Age libertines.

With the coming of the Great Depression in the 1930s, many black intellectuals in the United States became cynical with respect to the values of the Negro Renaissance. The romantic racialism of the Renaissance was continued by Francophone intellectuals of the Negritude school, especially as translations of Frobenius became available in French. In the United States, however, black intellectuals relocated their proletarianism in a Marxian rhetoric, and sometimes in actual Communist Party membership. Langston Hughes, who had been one of the intellectuals most associated with the exoticism of the twenties, refashioned himself as a Marxist, albeit half-heartedly. Richard Wright, the most successful black writer of the depression era, joined the Communist Party for a short time, but later expressed his disillusionment, in autobiographical writings and in his novel, *The Outsider*. Ralph Ellison, who never actually became a communist, satirized the racial clumsiness of white Marxists in his novel, *Invisible Man.*

Du Bois's path after 1930 is confusing and seemingly contradictory to those who do not have the stamina to trace his intellectual odyssey through voluminous publications over a period of 70 years. Du Bois, despite his left-liberal inclinations, expressed a black nationalist ideology, when he called for voluntary segregation in his *Dusk of Dawn* (1940), a book in which he specifically endorsed Washington's program of economic self help and self separation. On the one hand he defected from the integrationist line of the NAACP, grudgingly admitting that perhaps Booker T. Washington had correctly understood the importance of building an economic and institutional base upon which political activism might more successfully be grounded.

Du Bois's economic theories drifted steadily in the direction of black nationalist separatism. As an economic determinist, he now went a step beyond Booker T. Washington, embracing at least some aspects of Marxist economic theory. In 1962, the year before his death, he joined the Communist Party, although there is some controversy as to whether he ever became a doctrinaire Marxist, because Du Bois never seemed to supplant his Hegelian idealism with Marxist materialism. On the other hand, he did embrace a Leninist internationalism, and he became an apologist for Stalinism, attempting, as did Stalin, to reconcile

Marcus Garvey. (CORBIS/Bettman)

Marxist internationalism with nationalist multiculturalism. His framework for doing this was the Pan-African supra-nationalism, championed by Kwame Nkrumah, president of the Republic of Ghana. Du Bois eventually migrated to Ghana, ironically retracing the steps of the followers of Chief Alfred C. Sam, whom he had once condemned. Du Bois died in Ghana in 1963, a supporter of Nkrumah's increasingly ruthless dictatorial policies.

Other black intellectuals reappraised the doctrines of Booker T. Washington, although refusing to acknowledge they were doing so. Carter G. Woodson denounced the failure of the talented tenth to provide meaningful leadership in the struggle for desegregation and published *The Miseducation of the Negro* in 1933. Woodson's criticism of bourgeois insincerity reiterated the position of Washington in *Up From Slavery.* On the other hand, Woodson was clearly impatient with the accommodation to segregation on the part of the Booker T. Washington's ideological successors. E. Franklin Frazier likewise became increasingly critical of middle class venality. In 1947 he reiterated some of Woodson's points in an article on "The Negro's Vested Interest in Segregation," accusing the black bourgeoisie of a big-frog/little pond, mentality. Increasingly, he abandoned his hopes for the black middle class and the Negro businessman, which he had expressed during the 1920s, although refusing to see the irony that on this point, he was reiterating one of Booker T. Washington's fundamental doctrines. Like Washington, Frazier recognized the self-deception of the black middle class, but he bitterly condemned the Tuskegee machine's legacy of political accommodation.

It is often commented that Frazier owed an intellectual debt to Robert E. Park, a distinguished white professor at the University of Chicago. Earlier in his career, Park had been secretary to Booker T. Washington, and he had served as Washington's interpreter during a European tour. Sincerely admiring Washington as a politician and as a philosopher, Park once said, "I think I learned more about human nature and society in the South under Booker T. Washington than I had learned elsewhere in all my previous studies." Frazier never shared Park's admiration for Washington. Furthermore, he disagreed with Park's position that the personalities and psychologies of individuals might partially be influenced by hereditary racial traits. Frazier did, however, make use of Park's theory that black life had been catastrophically disrupted by slavery. In fact, he eventually went beyond Park to endorse the extreme view of black social pathology posited in Stanley Elkins's controversial work, *Slavery.* Frazier's obsession with social pathologies as the result of slavery and segregation was basic to his tendency to identify dysfunctional behavior in almost every black social institution, most notably in the black family.

Unlike Park and Du Bois, Frazier was neither ambivalent nor sentimental with respect to the traditional and sacred values associated with small village communities. Frazier believed that the increasing urbanization and secularization of American society would lead to the breakdown of traditional "caste restrictions." Therefore, he sanctioned cosmopolitanism as the best means of promoting human progress. Since in his view black separatism was nothing more than accommodation to racism, he came to disparage almost every aspect of black institutional life. His intellectual agenda after 1945 was determined by his uncompromising commitment to social integration and cultural assimilation. He opposed black nationalism as well as the accommodationist forms of racial separatism. This led to his diatribes against black institutions, notably *Black Bourgeoisie* (1957) and *The Negro Church* (1962). These publications, while brutally honest, factual, and courageous, in terms of a human rights agenda, failed to explore the question of separate cultural and institutional mechanisms for the improvement of African-American life.

From the mid 1930s to the mid 1960s, black intellectual leadership was overwhelmingly committed to integrationism. Walter White, as head of the NAACP had little patience with Du Bois's focus on encouraging improvements within the black community. Charles Hamilton Houston, a Howard University law professor, and his student Thurgood Marshall concentrat-

ed their efforts on a legal strategy for the destruction of segregation in the United States. In this they were supported by the direct political efforts of such activists as Mary Church Terrell and Mary McCleod Bethune. The sociological jurisprudence of Thurgood Marshall was grounded in the social and historical studies of such scholars as E. Franklin Frazier, Ralph Bunche, and John Hope Franklin.

Marshall, who had been head of the NAACP legal staff since 1938, eventually argued before the United States Supreme Court that the "separate but equal" doctrine was unconstitutional. Evidence was presented that in states where segregation was practiced, black institutions were invariably inferior to white institutions. The arguments of Thurgood Marshall were consistent with the views of Walter White, and in opposition to those of Du Bois. With all their implications, both positive and negative, they eventually carried the day and led to the *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision in 1954. There is continuing controversy among black intellectuals as to whether the legal strategy of White and Marshall was in every respect well-advised, although there is no disagreement that desegregation has been a blessing to black Americans. Nonetheless, many thinking people have begun to ask whether separate institutions must be categorically and inherently inferior to integrated ones. Ironically, *Brown vs. Board* has led to the virtual abandonment of the racial mission of several historically black colleges in the South, but it has not always lead to a proportional integration of traditionally white institutions.

The *Brown vs. Board* decision gave encouragement to civil rights advocates throughout the South, and in 1955, Rosa Parks' courageous refusal to relinquish her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, marked the beginning of the Civil Rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr., one of the leaders of the resulting boycott of public transportation in the city of Montgomery, became recognized as the principal philosopher of the movement. King's philosophy derived from the mainstream American "Social Gospel Movement," particularly from the writings of Walter Rauschenbush. The roots of his social thought are traceable to other American reformers including Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Washington Gladden. King also paid tribute to Mohandas Gandhi's philosophy of "Satyagraha," a term untranslatable in English, but loosely represented by the words "passive resistance."

During the height of the Civil Rights Movement, 1955-1965, black nationalism was confined almost exclusively to the lower economic classes. Black nationalists tended to be distrustful of King and the liberal intellectuals whom they perceived as too humble and accommodating in the face of white prejudice. They accused King and the left-liberal-progressives of discouraging black unity and self help. The best known examples of black nationalism in this period were the Moorish Science Temple, organized by Noble Drew Ali, and the Nation of Islam, organized by W. D. Fard and Elijah Muhammad, but not all black nationalists were Muslims. Another classic example of black nationalism flourished among separate black Jewish groups, who called themselves, "Black Hebrews," or "Ethiopian Hebrews." Some of these migrated to Israel from Detroit and Chicago during the late 1960s and early 1970s. These groups denounced the secularism and atheism that they identified with left-liberal traditions. The anti-religious attitudes of the American left are often disturbing to black nationalists.

Another tendency in African-American leadership, one that developed in opposition to the mainstream civil rights movement, was conservatism. The best known black conservative during the early 1960s was George Schuyler, a man of considerable complexity, who toyed intellectually with Marxism and with black nationalism, at various points in his career. Conservatives have not been ideologically bound either to integrationism or to separatism. They have believed that they can render the black presence in America more useful and acceptable to the society at large by endorsing the traditional religious, economic, and family values of American society. Generally moderate in ideology, they have often taken a dim view of interracial marriage, but their essential integrationism has led them to accept interracial marriage in recent years.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (National Archives)

Conservatives do not denounce black separatism, when it is associated with capitalist doctrines of self help, thus conservatives have often paid lip-service to groups such as the "Black Muslims." This is due to the black conservatives' partiality to economics as the means to improving the black condition in the U.S.A. They also advocate patriotism, denounce flag-burning, and support military service as a means to demonstrating full commitment to the American Way. Du Bois expressed a conservative viewpoint, during World War I, when he called on black Americans to temporarily set aside their grievances and rally around the war effort. Booker T. Washington's conservatism was apparent in his organizing the National Negro Business League.

The Nation of Islam, under the leadership of Messenger Elijah Muhammad was essentially conservative. Muhammad's principal spokesman during civil rights decade was Malcolm Little, a.k.a. Malcolm X, who at the beginning of his career functioned purely as a mouthpiece for the Messenger's self-help doctrines and militant anti-white demonology. According to this demonology, Caucasians were a race of devils, who persecuted black Americans purely because of the intrinsic and immutable evil of the white race. The only hope for black Americans was to leave the United States and found their own nation in Africa.

Malcolm X faithfully preached this doctrine throughout 90 percent of his public political life. A brilliant speaker, and a facile manipulator of white guilt, he began to perform widely before white liberal audiences and was invited to lecture at Harvard University and the University of London. Finally, he went too far for Elijah Muhammad. Malcolm made public statements offensive to many Americans in the aftermath of John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963. When asked what he thought of the Kennedy assassination, he responded that it was only a matter of the "chickens coming home to roost." He was obviously inspired by Madame Ngo Diem Nhu's accusations that President Kennedy was responsible for the assassinations of her husband and her brother-in-law, who was President of Vietnam. Elijah Muhammad, alarmed by the foreseeable public outcry evoked by such a statement, banned his disciple from speaking publicly. Malcolm submitted for several months but then began to denounce Muhammad, accusing him of numerous sexual improprieties, reminiscent of the rumors surrounding certain Renaissance popes. In 1964, Malcolm made the second of two pilgrimages to Mecca, and returned to proclaim that he was now a Sunni Muslim, and that he no longer considered all white people to be devils. His pronouncements after the summer of 1966 were universalist, rather than black nationalist, and seemed to be on a line of convergence with the radical leftist universalism of Martin Luther King, especially on such issues as opposition to the war in Vietnam.

Malcolm X was murdered in February, 1965, and there continues to be a great deal of controversy as to who planned and carried out the assassination. After his death, nationalists and socialists began to engage in bitter disputes over the meaning of his intellectual legacy. Posthumous publications became the basis of attempting to appropriate the symbol of Malcolm, who was widely sentimentalized as a martyr. Several of Malcolm's later speeches which had been given before the Trotskyist Socialist Labor Forum, were edited by the Trotskyist George Breitman. Breitman published a biography called The *Last Year of Malcolm X*, which argued inaccurately that Malcolm was a socialist practically from the time of his silencing by Muhammad. When pressed in debate by Reverend Albert Cleage, a Christian black nationalist, Breitman admitted, however, that Malcolm had not become an integrationist. No evidence has emerged to support the view that Malcolm ever abandoned black nationalism.

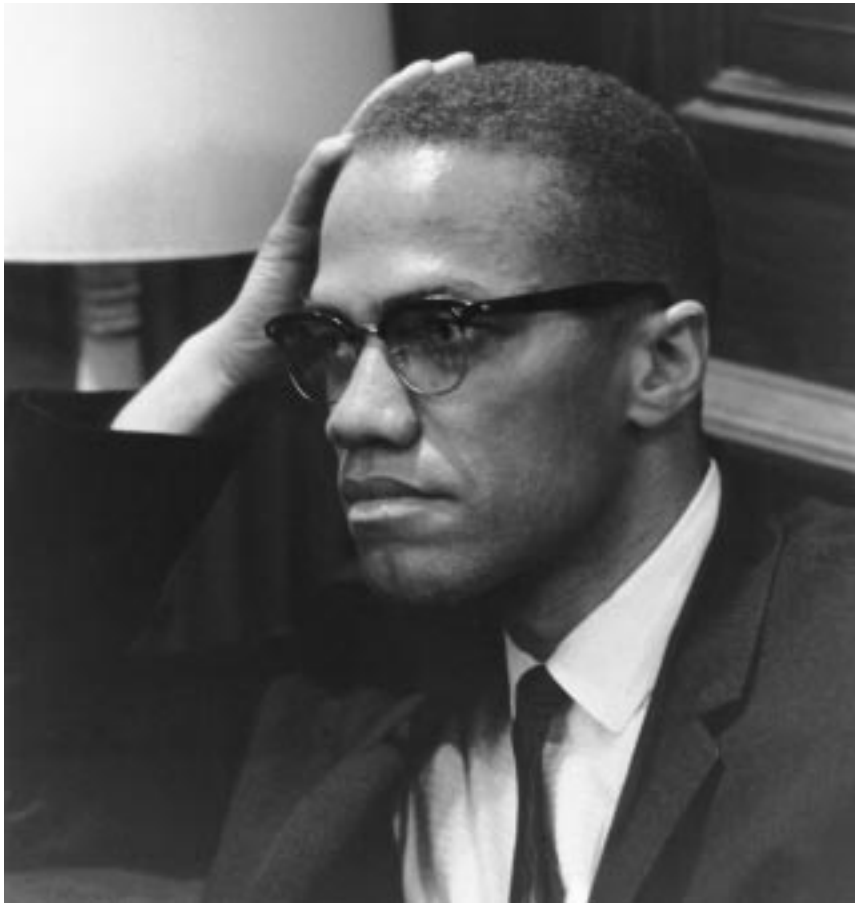
The posthumously published, and inappropriately titled, *Autobiography of Malcolm X,* written by Alex Haley, became the standard interpretation of Malcolm's significance, and elevated him to a status in death that he had never known during his lifetime. It should be recalled that during the early sixties, there were other radical black intellectuals who had considerably greater standing within the international community. Jomo Kenyatta, president of Kenya, Kwame Nkrumah, president of Ghana, and Paul Robeson, the Marxist performing artist, were viewed with adulation by college age intellectuals. LeRoi Jones, who later changed his name to Amiri Baraka, enjoyed a popularity equal to, if not exceeding that of Malcolm X, who as late as 1964, was widely viewed as a religious fanatic. Baraka's plays, *Dutchman* and *The Slave,* had greater appeal to young black intellectuals than did Malcolm's diatribes against marijuana, pork, and white women. Reverend Cleage observed, realistically in 1970, that "Malcolm knew when to die because dead he has more followers then he could ever have had alive."

When dealing with the death and life of Malcolm X, counter-factual thinking often seems to be the mode. George Breitman, Ossie Davis, and other contemporary black artists and intellectuals have all speculated on the wonderful things that Malcolm would have achieved if he had lived. Fair enough, but in this counter-factual world, were Malcolm X never assassinated there would have been other problems. Perhaps the fates would have claimed Amiri Baraka in his place. Malcolm's moment of truth would have arrived with the Six Day War. He would have been forced to side with the Syrians and the Egyptians, and public opinion would have reduced him to a one-dimensional anti-Semite.

After that, anathematized, Farakhanized, his name chiseled off the monuments, Malcolm X might have moved to Atlanta to run a little grocery store, as did that other aging

and forgotten radical of the sixties, H. Rap Brown. But Amiri Baraka, dying young, would be remembered as our shining black prince. And Spike Lee would create a cinematic fiction celebrating the myth of Baraka, while dismissing Malcolm as a superannuated has-been. Then, perhaps, the world's foremost authorities on everything black would write essays for the *New York Times Book Review,* relegating Malcolm X to the level of Eldridge Cleaver, the former Black Panther and Maulana Karenga, the cultural nationalist. But this curious, counterfactual world is on a side of the universe that we shall never see.

Black intellectual life in the 30 years since the death of Malcolm X has not been dominated by the nationalistic concerns that he identified as primal. Partial integration of the faculties of major northern universities has brought the most prominent black intelligentsia under the domination of intellectual fads and fashions that predominate in university environments. Between 1970 and 1995, black intellectual life defined itself increasingly in terms of the ideological interests of American university faculties. Mainstream black intellectuals, (those who are on the faculties of elite colleges and universities), receive their major support from mainstream whites, eschew the term liberal, preferring to call themselves "leftists" or "progressives." The



Malcolm X. (Library of Congress)

thinking of both groups usually assumes patterns determined by the "new left" agenda of multiculturalism and gender studies, and pays only a meager lip-service to race and class concerns. At times, their rhetoric involves a superficial, unconvincing, and safely diluted version of Malcolmism, liberally sprinkled with post-structuralist jargon and "politically correct" slogans.

Presently, a typical representative of leftist intellectualism is Cornell West, who holds a joint appointment in the Black Studies Department and the Divinity School at Harvard University. A typical representative of black conservatism is Shelby Steele, a professor of English at San Diego State University, who has never produced a scholarly work in the field of English, but devotes his efforts to undermining the affirmative action policies that led to his hiring. While the ideological perspectives of the two men are dissimilar, they share a common trait of intellectual sloppiness. Both are given to the preachment of dogmas that are unsupported by empirical method and tailored to suit the prejudices of the white academics who are their respective constituencies. Meanwhile, the black nationalist position, while entirely out of fashion on the elite campuses, is flourishing in public colleges and universities that serve working class constituencies. Nationalism and Afrocentrism are essentially escapist, however, and in the case of their most convincing proponent, Molefi Assanti of Temple University, supported by the very French deconstructionist metaphysics that they disavow.

In recent years, black intellectuals in the University have often been recruited by and affiliated with black studies departments. Most of our salary lines, when the computer printouts come to light, can be seen to have been created specifically in connection with affirmative action initiatives in the central administration. Those who have been hired to meet standing departmental needs have usually been hired in departments of black studies. It is clear that the patterns of special treatment and segregation that led to the creation of a distinctive black intellectual tradition in America have not yet been eradicated.

The best generalization that can be made concerning the overall pattern of black American intellectual life in the 20th century is that almost every aspect of black mental activity has been colored by the race question that has been so important in the lives of African Americans. In the unlikely event that the United States is able, in some future age, to create an egalitarian model of American society, in which race no longer imposes limitations of personal fulfillment, black American intellectual life will eventually change to reflect this new ideal. If, as seems more likely, future generations of black Americans find themselves a marginalized minority, at the bottom of a social hierarchy made up of Aryans, Hispanics, Jews, Asians, and Arabs then we may expect that African-American intellectual life will retain its historically separate identity. In such an eventuality African-American intellectual activity will continue to center around questions of race.

Bibliography

DuBois, W.E.B. *Souls of Black Folk.* Chicago: A.C. McClurg, 1903.

Franklin, John Hope and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. *From Slavery to Freedom.* New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1988.

Harlan, Louis R. *Booker T. Washington. The Making of a Black Leader,* 1856-1901. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.

Haley, Alex. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X.* New York, Grove Press, Inc, 1965.

Lincoln, C. Eric. *The Black Muslims in America.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1961.

Logan, Rayford W. *The Betrayal of the Negro.* London: Collier-MacMillan, 1965.

Martin, Tony. *Race First.* Westport: Greenwood, 1976.

Meier, August. *Negro Thought in America*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963.

Moses, Wilson J. *The Golden Age of Black Nationalism.* 1850-1925. Oxford University Press. New York, 1978.

——— *Black Messiahs and Uncle Toms.* University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993.

———*Alexander Crummell*. Oxford University Press: New York, 1989.

——— *Classical Black Nationalism.* New York University Press: New York, 1996.

Washington, Booker T. *Up From Slavery.* New York: Doubleday, Page and Co, 1902.

Wells, Ida B. *Crusade for Justice.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

Wintz, Cary D., ed. A*frican-American Political Thought.* 1890-1930. Armonk, New York, M.E. Sharpe, 1996.

Chapter Ten

The Second Reconstruction of the South

Clayborne Carson

The modern African-American civil rights campaign grew from earlier freedom movements that have been continuing features of United States history. At the time of the nation's birth, political rights were not equally available to African Americans, women, Indians, and males without property. The successive struggles that sought to extend civil rights to these excluded groups resulted in fundamental departures from the limited conceptions of citizenship and the role of government that prevailed when the nation was founded. These struggles revised the Constitution of the United States in ways that would have been unthinkable to the prosperous white men who wrote that document in 1787.

African-American civil rights movements have therefore had a particularly important impact on dominant conceptions of the rights of American citizens and of the role of government in protecting these rights. Although the United States Supreme Court ruled in the 1857 Dred Scott decision that African Americans were not citizens, the subsequent Civil War changed the legal status of black Americans. The crucial role of black soldiers in the successful effort to defeat the southern Confederacy transformed the war into a campaign for African-American freedom. During the period of Reconstruction after the Civil War, federal military troops in the South protected African-American political rights guaranteed by the newly-ratified 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution. Although the removal of federal troops from the South ended the Reconstruction era, the constitutional amendments passed during the period remained the foundation of later civil rights reforms that benefitted black Americans and other groups. 20th-century civil rights movements were initially efforts to prod the federal government to enforce already existing constitutional rights.

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), an interracial group founded in 1909, became the most durable of the civil rights groups of the 20th-century. Although many organizations later challenged the NAACP's reliance on the tactics of litigation and governmental lobbying, the group won a series of major legal cases. The Supreme Court's decision in the NAACP-sponsored case, *Brown* v. *Board of Education* (1954), outlawed segregated public schools and encouraged southern blacks to challenge other forms of racial segregation.

Although the *Brown* decision repudiated the doctrine of separate but equal, the United States was still far from the ideal of racial equality. Indeed, the ruling reinforced the notion that the "Negro problem" was to be resolved by whites in positions of power. African Americans remained an insignificant political force. Ten percent of the nation's population was black, but there were no black governors or senators and only two black representatives

among the 435 members of the House of Representatives. Black southerners wishing to participate in electoral politics faced daunting obstacles — poll taxes, literacy tests, intimidation, and sometimes violence. On Christmas Eve, 1951, Florida NAACP leader and founder of the Progressive Voters League, Harry T. Moore and his wife were killed by a bomb placed under their home. In 1953, Mississippi voter registration activist George Lee was fatally shot. In both instances, the killers were never brought to trial.

Despite such anti-black violence, some African Americans launched a grassroots campaign against segregation and other forms of racial discrimination. In part, their goal was to force the federal government to intervene to protect their civil rights as it had done during the Reconstruction era, but the southern mass struggles of the 1950s and 1960s also sought goals beyond federal civil rights legislation. As in other sustained social movements, participants in the southern struggles changed their attitudes because of their involvement. In time, they saw themselves as part of a freedom struggle seeking a wide range of economic, political, and even cultural objectives.

There were many individual protests against the Jim Crow system, but a single, spontaneous act of rebellion in Montgomery, Alabama became the catalyst for the Second Reconstruction. News accounts later described Rosa Parks as a seamstress to emphasize the fact that an ordinary black woman had taken the first step to overcome a long-established system of segregation. This was misleading, however, because she was a civil rights activist who was well prepared for the role she would play. Since the 1940s, Parks had been an active NAACP member, working closely with the head of Montgomery's chapter, E. D. Nixon. During the summer of 1955, she attended workshops at Tennessee's Highlander Folk School, a training center for labor and civil rights organizers.

When she boarded a Montgomery city bus on the afternoon of December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks knew that black riders were expected to sit at the back of the bus. Several times before, even after she had paid her fare, white bus drivers had warned her to reenter the bus through the rear door, sometimes driving away before she could reboard. After many years of enduring such treatment, she finally reached a breaking point. When white passengers boarded the full bus, the bus driver asked her to stand to allow a white man to sit. Parks, who had taken the seat behind the last row of "white" seats, refused to move. The bus driver warned, "I'm going to have you arrested." Parks still refused to move. After police arrived and took her to jail, she was charged with violating Alabama segregation laws.

Black residents of Montgomery mobilized quickly after the arrest of Parks, a respected member of the black community. Members of the Women's Political Council proposed that blacks refuse to ride the buses for one day as a protest against discrimination. The boycott, which began on December 5, was an overwhelming success, with almost no blacks riding the buses. That afternoon, black residents decided to continue the boycott. They formed the Montgomery Improvement Association and selected the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., as president of the new group.

Only 26 years old and with only one year of experience as the pastor of the Montgomery's Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, King knew that he could not sustain the boycott alone. "I neither started the protest nor suggested it," he later wrote. "I simply responded to the call of the people for a spokesman." Despite his youth, however, King was well prepared for the task. King's oratorical abilities and dedication were evident to those who knew him. The son and grandson of ministers who were also civil rights advocates, King's strong commitment to social justice was evident even before he enrolled at Morehouse College at the age of 16. He and other students listened to inspiring lectures by Morehouse President Benjamin E. Mays, a social gospel proponent. While at Morehouse, King responded to his "inescapable urge to serve society" by deciding to study for the ministry. As a 21 year old student at Crozer Theological Seminary, he traced his "anti-capitalistic feelings" to his memories of Depression-era bread lines. After receiving his

doctorate in theology from Boston University, King felt a responsibility to return to his native South rather than to pursue an academic career up North.

King's address on the evening of December 5 to the first mass meeting of the boycott movement combined militancy with moderation. He aroused the overflow audience at Holt Street Baptist church by proclaiming the larger meaning of the boycott. "And you know, my friends, there comes a time when people get tired of being trampled over by the iron feet of oppression," he told cheering listeners. Urging Montgomery blacks to remain nonviolent and true to their Christian faith, he identified their cause with the traditional values of the nation. "If we are wrong, the Supreme Court of this nation is wrong! If we are wrong, God Almighty is wrong!"

King's rousing speeches during the boycott strengthened the resolve of black residents. He understood that the movement symbolized more than simply a desire for desegregation; it represented a new direction in African-American politics. As the boycott continued, he came to see "that the Christian doctrine of love operating through the Gandhian method of nonviolence was one of the most potent weapons available to the Negro in his struggle for freedom." King and other boycott leaders refused to back down even in the face of violent white retaliation. His home was bombed, and Montgomery officials indicted him and other boycott leaders on charges of violating a state law against boycotts.

Despite such intimidation, the protest movement continued until December, 1956, when the Supreme Court ruled against Montgomery's bus segregation policy. African Americans had shown that a nonviolent movement could succeed if blacks remained united and black leaders refused to be intimidated. Soon after the Montgomery boycott ended, King and other politically active black ministers formed the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) to build upon the success in Montgomery. As president of the new organization, King strengthened his commitment to the use of Gandhian tactics, but he was reluctant to challenge publicly the more cautious litigation strategy of the NAACP. Nevertheless, despite King's restraint, some southern blacks were unwilling to wait for guidance from established black leaders. In 1960 students at predominant black colleges initiated their own militant challenges to the southern Jim Crow system.

RISE OF THE STUDENT MOVEMENT IN THE 1960S

When the Supreme Court announced in 1955 that its earlier Brown decision would be enforced "with all deliberate speed," instead of immediately, southern white officials became obstinate, hoping to postpone integration of public schools. Rather than relying on the federal government to bring about school desegregation, southern blacks soon realized that they would have to prod the federal government into action. Black students were more willing to assume this role than were the established civil rights leaders.

Even before the 1960s, black students had played crucial roles in the school desegregation efforts. The NAACP had succeeded in the courtroom, but carrying out the Brown decision required brave youngsters willing to endure hostility when they entered previously white schools. The nine black students who in 1958 had faced white mobs to attend Little Rock's Central High School became heroes to black youths. The students' determination forced a reluctant President Dwight D. Eisenhower to counter Arkansas Governor Orvil Faubus's public challenge to federal authority by placing the Arkansas National Guard under federal control and sending soldiers to protect the black students.

On February 1, 1960, four first-year students at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical College ignited a new wave of protests. The students had debated what could be done about the segregation policies of Greensboro's Woolworth variety store, where black customers were not allowed to sit at the store's lunch counter. David Richmond, Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil, and Ezell Blair, Jr., decided to "sit-in" — that is, to remain seated at

the lunch counter until they were served or arrested. When the surprised store manager decided not to seek their arrest, they returned to their campus to recruit more demonstrators. After several days of increasingly large protests, students at nearby colleges decided to join the sit-in movement.

During the following weeks, thousands of black college and high school students in many southern communities protested against segregated eating places by launching their own sit-ins. Student protesters were not intimidated when police came to arrest them. Many went to jail singing "freedom songs," adding their own words to traditional black church songs and popular rock-and-roll tunes. SCLC, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and the NAACP attempted to provide guidance for student protesters after the initial sit-in in Greensboro, but student activists insisted on forming their own local groups under student leadership.

STUDENT NONVIOLENT COORDINATING COMMITTEE (SNCC)

Although sit-in protesters admired and respected King, most wanted to maintain their independence from SCCC and the other existing civil rights organizations. Ella Baker was one of the few older civil rights leaders who sympathized with the students' militancy and desire for independence from existing organizations. After a long career in the NAACP, Baker had served as administrator of SCLC's Atlanta headquarters, but she questioned whether southern blacks should depend on a few charismatic leaders, such as King. Baker invited activists in the sit-ins to attend an Easter weekend gathering at Shaw University in North Carolina and encouraged them to form an independent organization. She also urged students to practice "group-centered" leadership rather than create a "leader-centered" group, such as King's SCLC. What the movement needed, she said, were "people who are interested not in being leaders as much as in developing leadership among other people." After the students voted to establish the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), she left SCLC and became one of SNCC's adult advisors. With her encouragement, SNCC became a community of activists and organizers who emphasized the role of grassroots movements.

After John Kennedy became president in 1961, civil rights activists continued to find new ways of pressing his administration to act on civil rights. Thus, during the spring and summer of 1961, student activists unexpectedly forced federal action after the Congress of Racial Equality sent a small group of "freedom riders" through the southern states. Although the interracial CORE contingent ended their campaign when white mobs in Alabama attacked them, Nashville student activist Diane Nash immediately mobilized other students to continue the freedom ride. Nash and other students rode buses into Jackson, Mississippi, where police quickly arrested and charged them with violating the states' segregation laws. Even after the first group of freedom riders were arrested, dozens of other young protesters followed on buses to spend their summer vacations in Mississippi prisons. Despite imprisonment, they kept their spirits high, singing freedom songs and discussing new campaigns. Many decided to leave college to become full-time participants in the struggle. Such activists took pride in their identity as militant freedom riders. Diane Nash saw herself as part of "a group of people suddenly proud to be called 'black'."

The brash freedom riders placed the Kennedy administration on the defensive. When students asked the federal government for protection, Kennedy had to balance his desire to support civil rights against his fear of upsetting southern whites. Through behind-the-scenes efforts, the President, along with his brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, tried to stop the rides. Kennedy administration representatives tried to convince the students to engage in voter registration efforts instead of desegregation protests. Although some student activists recognized the need for such efforts, they were disappointed and disillusioned by the Kennedys' unwillingness to take political risks to support civil rights.

BIRMINGHAM CAMPAIGN OF 1963

The Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth of Birmingham was one of the many grassroots civil rights leaders who fought lonely battles during the late 1950s and 1960s. A founder of the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights, Shuttlesworth's church had been bombed, and he had been arrested while helping freedom riders. By 1963, Shuttlesworth had decided that the Birmingham movement needed outside help. He invited King to come to the city for a major campaign to overcome racial segregation.

King and other SCLC leaders prepared a plan called "Project C" (for "confrontation"). King's strategy was to provoke confrontations with local white officials, especially the openly anti-black police commissioner, Eugene T. "Bull" Conner. King believed that such televised confrontations between nonviolent protesters and brutal police with clubs and police dogs would attract the sympathy of northern whites. King believed that police attacks against civil rights protesters would bring federal intervention to achieve civil rights reforms.

During April, SCLC officials, along with local black leaders, organized a series of sit-ins, marches, and rallies. After King was arrested while leading a march, a group of white ministers in Birmingham denounced his involvement in the protests. King defended his protest strategy in one of his most famous statements, "Letter from Birmingham City Jail." He argued that white resistance to black equality had forced blacks to move outside legal channels to express their discontent. It was necessary, he said, for blacks to create a crisis rather than wait forever for change. He criticized those who counseled blacks to be patient: "…when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will…when you see the vast majority of your 20 million Negro brothers smothering in the airtight cage of poverty…when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of 'nobodiness'; then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait." He also warned that whites who refused to negotiate with nonviolent black leaders would soon have to deal with more militant leaders. Frustrated blacks, he argued, might turn to black nationalism, "a development that will lead inevitably to a frightening racial nightmare."

The Birmingham protests grew during the spring of 1963. By early May, more than 3,000 blacks had been jailed. On May 7, after thousands of school children marched into Birmingham's business district, Governor George Wallace sent state patrolmen to reinforce Conner's police, who used water hoses to disperse the children. A few days later, when bombs exploded at the home of King's brother and at the SCLC local office, angry black demonstrators threw rocks at police. City officials finally made concessions, and the Birmingham protests subsided.

By this time, however, the Birmingham protests had sparked many such local protest movements. An estimated 930 public protest demonstrations in more than 100 cities would take place during the year. Unlike the lunch-counter protests, which were generally well organized and peaceful, some of the larger protests during the spring and summer of 1963 involved increasingly restive and socially alienated blacks who had little sympathy for nonviolence. Each of the national civil rights organizations tried to offer guidance for the mass marches and demonstrations that culminated in the Birmingham protests of spring 1963, but none of them could completely manage these protests. King and other nonviolent leaders feared that they might lose control of the black struggle to black nationalist leaders, such as Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam.

MARCH ON WASHINGTON

That summer, veteran civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph proposed a march on Washington to give blacks an opportunity to express their growing discontent in a nonviolent way. When President Kennedy initially objected to the idea of a march, Randolph told the

President that "Negroes were already in the streets. It is very likely impossible to get them off." He asked Kennedy: "If they are bound to be in the streets in any case, is it not better that they be led by organizations dedicated to civil rights and disciplined by struggle rather than to leave them to other leaders who care neither about civil rights nor about nonviolence?"

The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, held August 28, 1963, was the largest single demonstration of the black civil rights movement. Over 200,000 people gathered at the Lincoln Memorial to hear singers, such as Mahalia Jackson, leaders of major civil rights groups, and other national figures. SNCC Chairperson John Lewis used his speech as an opportunity to charge that American policy was "dominated by politicians who build their careers on immoral compromises and ally themselves with open forms of political, economic, and social exploitation." Lewis's speech was the most controversial statement made at the march, but King's address would be the one most remembered. Calling upon America to live up to its noble ideals, King recounted the difficulties the black freedom struggle had faced. But he added, "I still have a dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed — we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." King looked forward to the day when his four children would "live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

The March on Washington was a major event of a decade of struggle, but the black-white coalition that supported civil rights reform came apart during the years afterward. Civil rights leaders recognized that they were caught in the middle, between increasingly angry blacks who were frustrated by the slow pace of transformation and white political leaders who resisted rapid social change. SNCC workers bitterly criticized the Kennedy administration for failing to protect southern blacks from racist violence. A few weeks after the march even moderate leaders reacted angrily to the bombing of a Birmingham church, a bombing that killed four black children. Speaking on behalf of an outraged group of black spokespersons who confronted President Kennedy at the White House, King warned that "the Negro community is about to reach a breaking point." King warned that "if something isn't done to give the Negro a new sense of hope and a sense of protection, there is a danger we will face the worse race riot we have ever seen in this country." Kennedy responded by urging the black delegation to restrain black violence while he sought passage of a major new civil rights bill. "Tell the Negro communities that this is a very hard price which they have to pay to get this job done."

Kennedy's assassination a few months later reflected the nation's violent mood. Toleration of racist violence had created a climate in which political violence of all kinds could flourish. King noted that, "in the life of Negro civil-rights leaders, the whine of the bullet from ambush, the roar of the bomb have all too often broken the night's silence." Malcolm X of the Nation of Islam similarly saw Kennedy's assassination as an outgrowth of a violent atmosphere that white leaders condoned. He called the president's death a case of the "chickens coming home to roost."

The new President, Lyndon Baines Johnson, a Southerner from Texas, did not have a reputation as a strong advocate of civil rights. To the surprise of some activists, however, Johnson pushed through Congress the historic Civil Rights Act of 1964. Although the new legislation did not eliminate all barriers to racial equality, it was among the most important reforms of the era after World War II. The most dramatic result of the Civil Rights Act was the elimination of "whites only" public facilities. Other less noticed provisions of the legislation also caused major changes in American life, not only in the South but also in the North. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act dealt mostly with racial discrimination aimed at African Americans, but the legislation also outlawed discrimination in the employment and education of women and nonblack minorities.

MISSISSIPPI VOTING RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Despite passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, substantial racial barriers remained in the South. This was particularly true in the rural areas of Mississippi and Alabama where blacks outnumbered whites. In such areas, widespread poverty among blacks made desegregation of public facilities a less important racial goal than political and economic gains.

Because racial control was at stake, white resistance to civil rights reforms was particularly intense in these states. The deep South was notorious because of its history of lynchings and other acts of racial violence. Mississippi, in particular, was the stronghold of southern segregation. In 1962 the United States Commission on Civil Rights reported that there was "danger of a complete breakdown of law and order" in the state. "Citizens of the United States have been shot, set upon by vicious dogs, beaten and otherwise terrorized because they sought to vote," the Commission reported.

Robert Moses, an SNCC worker who directed the voting rights effort of Mississippi's Council of Federal Organizations (COFO), implemented Ella Baker's strategy of developing leadership at the "grassroots" level rather than relying on top-down leadership. Convincing black Mississippians to become active in voting rights efforts was difficult, however, given the fierce opposition of local whites. In September, 1961, a white state representative had killed Herbert Lee, a black resident who supported the voter registration effort. An all-white jury quickly absolved the assailant. During the fall of 1962, when a large mob of whites rioted in a violent protest against the admission to the University of Mississippi of a black student, James Meredith, President Kennedy sent federal troops to Oxford, Mississippi. In June 1963 a white supremacist shot and killed NAACP leader Medgar Evers at his home in Jackson, Mississippi.

These violent attacks discouraged many blacks from registering to vote, but civil rights workers responded by showing black residents that it was possible to resist white domination. When a sheriff asked Sam Block, a young SNCC worker in Greenwood, Mississippi, to pack his clothes and leave town, Block replied, "Well, sheriff, if you don't want to see me here, I think the best thing for you to do is pack your clothes and leave. Get out of town, cause I'm here to stay, I came here to do a job and this is my intention, I'm going to do this job." Block and other organizers sought to reverse the effects of generations of racial oppression. For blacks who had become accustomed to their status as second-class citizens, joining the freedom struggle involved a dramatic transformation in their lives.

Fannie Lou Hamer, for example, had spent her life on a cotton plantation before she heard about the voting rights movement. Hew parents, like many blacks in the state, had been sharecroppers, giving part of their crop to the person who owned their land. "All of us worked in the fields, of course, but we never did get anything out of sharecropping," she remembered. Hamer had only attended elementary school before dropping out to work. She was 44 years old when she went to a voting rights meeting and listened to Moses and other SNCC workers. When the civil rights workers asked who would go to the voter registration office, Hamer raised her hand. "I guess if I'd had any sense I'd been a little scared, but what was the point of being scared," she explained. "The only thing they could do to me was kill me and it seemed like they'd been trying to do that a little bit at a time ever since I could remember."

MISSISSIPPI SUMMER PROJECT OF 1964

By the end of 1963, Moses, Hamer, and other Mississippi civil rights workers had concluded that blacks in the state were unlikely to make gains unless the federal government intervened to protect them. Hoping that the presence of whites would bring national attention and restrain racist violence, they developed a plan to recruit white volunteers to work in Mississippi. Although some black COFO organizers believed that the white volunteers would hamper their long-term effort to develop self-reliant local black leadership, most recognized that they needed outside support.

The 1964 Mississippi Summer Project attracted the attention of the nation. In June, even as the volunteers were preparing for their trip south, they learned that three civil rights workers had been reported missing from a trip to investigate the burning of a black church near Philadelphia, Mississippi. The disappearance of three civil rights workers, two white and one black, led to a massive investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), which had been reluctant to offer protection to civil rights workers. Following a massive search involving military personnel, the bodies of James Chaney, Mickey Schwerner, and Andrew Goodman were found in August, buried in an earthen dam. The killers were never tried on state murder charges, but several later went to prison on federal charges of interfering with the civil rights of the victims.

Despite the killings, the Summer Project continued. It had a profound impact on the lives of participants, who worked closely with local black residents. For many white volunteers, the summer provided their first opportunity to work on an equal basis with blacks. Among the most successful aspects of the project were the "freedom schools," which developed new techniques to improve the academic and political skills of black children — and some adults. For the first time, many students learned about African-American history.

The Summer Project ended with efforts to challenge the seating of the all-white Mississippi delegation to the Democratic National Convention, which was held that August in Atlantic City, New Jersey. To challenge the regular Democratic party in the state, civil rights workers organized the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), which was open to all races. "We decided to form our own party because the whites wouldn't even let us register," explained Fannie Lou Hamer. The MFDP delegates made clear their support for President Lyndon Johnson, while the regular delegation hinted that they would support Republican Barry Goldwater because of Johnson's civil rights policies. The MFDP collected evidence to support their claim that black voters suffered discrimination and racist violence. Speaking on behalf of the MFDP before the Democratic Party's Credentials Committee, Hamer attracted national television coverage when she gave an emotional account of being fired from her job and later beaten in jail. "All of this is on account we want to register, to become first-class citizens, and if the Freedom Democratic Party is not seated now, I question America," she testified.

Despite Hamer's testimony, the MFDP delegation did not unseat the regular delegation. President Johnson feared that he would lose southern white support and refused to support the MFDP. The new party's support began to weaken as liberal leaders such as Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, many black politicians, and even Martin Luther King himself felt pressures from Johnson. Many former supporters urged MFDP delegates to accept a compromise that would give them two "at-large" seats along with a promise to ban racial discrimination at the next convention in 1968. Most of the MFDP delegates opposed such a compromise, insisting that they had risked their lives and that politicians should therefore be willing to take political risks. Hamer scoffed, "We didn't come all this way for no two seats." The delegation voted to reject the compromise.

The MFDP challenge in 1964 marked the beginning of a major transformation of African-American politics. Disappointment with the failure of Democratic leaders to back the MFDP challenge created a sense of disillusionment among civil rights activists. Many agreed with Fannie Lou Hamer's conclusion that "we learned the hard way that even though we had all the law and all the righteousness on our side — that white man is not going to give up his power to us." Black organizers involved in the Summer Project were also disturbed that the presence of college-educated white volunteers had undermined the confidence of less-educated black leaders. After the tumultuous summer, some civil rights workers even began to question whether the ideal of racial integration was achievable.

ALABAMA VOTING RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN 1965

While SNCC workers were moving in new directions, Martin Luther King's SCLC also began a new voting rights campaign in Selma, Alabama. As in other places, King hoped that marches and mass rallies would focus national attention on the voting rights issue. Early in March, SCLC, SNCC, and SCLC jointly planned a march from Selma to the state capitol in Montgomery. Because of a previous commitment, however, King was not present when marchers left Selma on Sunday afternoon, March 7. At Pettus Bridge on the outskirts of Selma, police on horseback attacked the marchers using tear gas and clubs when they refused to turn back. Television and newspaper pictures of policemen attacking nonviolent protesters shocked the nation and angered black activists. SNCC chairperson John Lewis, who suffered a fractured skull during the melee, afterwards remarked, "I don't see how President Johnson can send troops to Vietnam…and can't send troops to Selma, Alabama."

News of the attack at Pettus Bridge — activists referred to it as "Bloody Sunday" — brought hundreds of civil rights sympathizers to Selma. White officials obtained a court order against further marchers, but many blacks were determined to mobilize another march. Young SNCC activists challenged King to defy the court order, but he was reluctant to do anything that would lessen public support for the voting rights cause. On March 10, King turned back a second march to the Pettus Bridge when marchers reached a police barricade. That evening a group of Selma whites killed a northern white minister, James Reeb, who had joined the demonstrations. In contrast to the killing a few weeks before of a black demonstrator, Jimmy Lee Jackson, Reeb's death led to a national outcry — President Johnson sent flowers to his widow — against racial violence in Selma.

After several postponements of the march, civil rights advocates proponents finally gained court permission to proceed. The Selma to Montgomery march was the culmination of a stage of the African-American freedom struggle. It led to the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 but it was also the last major racial protest movement to receive substantial white support. When the marchers arrived at the capitol in Montgomery, King delivered one of his most rousing speeches. "Our aim must never be to defeat or humiliate the white man but to win his friendship and understanding," he insisted. "We must come to see that the end we seek is a society at peace with itself, a society that can live with its conscience. That will be the day not of the white man, not of the black man. That will be the day of man as man." He predicted that such a day would not take long to arrive, because "however difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long, because truth pressed to earth will rise again."

King realized that the nation was still many years away from his dream of a society free of racial discrimination. In August, just five days after President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the arrest of a black man in the Watts section of Los Angeles led to several days of black rioting. During the next few years, similar riots would occur in dozens of American cities. During the summer of 1967, for example, 23 people were killed in a rebellion in Newark, New Jersey, and 43 were killed in Detroit. Such racial violence revealed that civil rights reform had not changed material conditions of life for most African Americans. Blacks could enter restaurants, but many lacked the money to pay for a meal. Blacks could vote, but they still had not gained the power to improve their lives through the political system.

RISE OF MILITANT GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS

As civil rights activists began to question their own long term goals, many began to respond to influences from outside their own movement. As a member of the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X had been a harsh critic of King's non-violent approach and integrationist goals, but by 1964 Malcolm began to question Elijah Muhammad's racial separatists doctrines and lack of involvement in the protest movement. He heard increasingly in black communities: "Those

Martin Luther King, leading Civil Rights marchers, Chicago, 1966. (CORBIS/Bettman)

Muslims talk tough, but they never do anything, unless somebody bothers Muslims." Although he remained critical of King's nonviolent approach, he respected "grassroots" leaders, such as Fannie Lou Hamer. Malcolm decided to leave the Nation of Islam to form his own group, the Organization of Afro-American Unity.

During the last year of his life, Malcolm's ideas converged with those of many veterans of the civil rights struggle. After his assassination in February, 1965, Malcolm's ideas remained popular among militant young activists in the civil rights movement.

SNCC workers were particularly attracted to Malcolm's ideas. In May, 1966, Stokely Carmichael became SNCC's new chair, replacing John Lewis, a veteran of the sit-ins and free-

dom rides who was now considered insufficiently militant. Carmichael had helped black residents of Lowndes County, Alabama, establish the all-black Lowndes County Freedom Organization, better known as the Black Panther Party. Carmichael soon provided a slogan that seemed to symbolize SNCC's own disillusionment with white liberals as well as the resentments of black ghetto residents. The Black Power slogan quickly became popular in black communities after Carmichael shouted, "We want Black Power." During a voting rights march through Mississippi, Carmichael and other advocates of black power criticized white allies who insisted that blacks remained nonviolent. "They admonish blacks to be nonviolent," Carmichael said. "Let them preach nonviolence in the white community."

Although Black Power was a political slogan, it also symbolized a broader cultural transformation. African Americans began to express their enhanced sense of pride through art and literature as well as through political action. Playwright Leroi Jones, who changed his name to Amiri Baraka, became a leader of the Black Arts movement, which sought to create positive images for blacks. Popular black singers such as James Brown and Aretha Franklin expressed the spirit of "Soul." Sports figures, such as Muhammad Ali, also identified with Black Power sentiments. During the playing of the national anthem at the 1968 Olympics, two African-American athletes raised clenched fists in a "black power salute" on the victory stand after their event. At numerous colleges and universities, black students demanded Black Studies programs that would emphasize the contributions of African and African-American people.

Although Martin Luther King was critical of the Black Power movement, believing that it would decrease white support for the black struggle, he acknowledged that black people needed a positive sense of identity in order to advance. "Psychological freedom, a firm sense of self-esteem, is the most powerful weapon against the long night of physical slavery," he said. "No Lincolnian emancipation proclamation or Johnsonian civil rights bill can totally bring this kind of freedom." King urged blacks to say to themselves and the world, "I am somebody. I am a person. I am a man with dignity and honor. I have a rich and noble history."

Recognizing that he must encourage angry northern urban blacks to see the potential effectiveness of nonviolent tactics, King launched a campaign in Chicago to address the problems of urban blacks. Like many other veterans of the civil rights movement, however, King discovered that problems of northern blacks were more difficult to solve than the problem of southern segregation. Eliminating poverty required large expenditures. Northern liberals who supported the southern civil rights movement often were less willing to support black advancement efforts in their own cities.

By the end of 1967, King had decided that a Poor People's Campaign was needed to prod the nation into action. His plan was to bring to Washington thousands of poor people — blacks, poor whites, Native Americans, Mexican Americans and other Hispanics. They would engage in protests designed to pressure President Johnson into increasing funding for his "War on Poverty." After King criticized Johnson for diverting funds from anti-poverty efforts to the war in Vietnam, he was caught between Black Power advocates who thought he was too cautious and Johnson supporters who saw him as too militant. King lost much of his popularity as he pushed ahead with the Poor People's March.

In early April, 1968, King came to Memphis, Tennessee, to offer his support for garbage workers who were striking for high wages and better working conditions. He was depressed about the opposition he faced and disturbed that some young blacks in Memphis had turned to violence to express their grievances. King met with young gang leaders to convince them to return to nonviolent tactics, but many newspapers urged King to call off his march to Washington. On April 3, he addressed a mass meeting in Memphis and confessed that he was uncertain about what lay ahead. "We've got some difficult days ahead," he told the audience. "But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the moun-

taintop." King hinted that he might not be there, but that black people would "get to the promised land."

The following evening, an assassin shot King as he stood on the balcony of his Memphis hotel room. King's death led to a new wave of urban racial violence. Thousands of blacks took to the streets to protest the loss of the most well-known advocate of nonviolence. Even after King's death, the Poor People's campaign continued for several months under the leadership of Ralph Abernathy, King's main lieutenant, but the campaign had little success in changing national policies. Eliminating poverty would remain one of the unachieved goals of the African- American freedom struggle.

The late 1960s were a period of black militancy and white repression. White politicians such as Alabama governor George Wallace encouraged a "white backlash" against black protests and civil rights gains. The African-American freedom struggle had become a national rather than southern movement, and white opposition was as strong in some northern cities as it had been in the South. Many northern whites strongly opposed efforts to end segregation in northern cities, efforts that resulted from residential patterns rather than from discriminating laws.

Black frustrations continued to grow, because civil rights reforms had increased the expectations of many blacks that their lives would change for the better. Indeed, some positive changes did occur during the late 1960s. New job opportunities became available, but middle-class blacks were the main beneficiaries. For the first time, a few large cities elected black mayors. But for poor blacks conditions remained the same or even got worse.

BLACK PANTHER PARTY

The Black Panther Party was one of the new organizations that reflected the increased militancy and frustration of urban blacks. Inspired by the example of SNCC in the South, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale formed the Oakland-based party in 1966. Attracting mainly young people, the Panthers quickly became the most widely-known black militant political organization of the late 1960s. The Panthers urged blacks to defend themselves by "picking up the gun." Wearing the group's distinctive black leather jackets, Panthers openly carried weapons and stood their ground when police questioned their right to bear arms. The party's ideas were drawn from a variety of sources, including Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and the examples of revolutionary movements in Asia and Africa. The political goals of the Panthers were summarized in the last item of their ten-point Platform and Program: "We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace."

The Black Panther Party attracted considerable support from young blacks, but police repression severely weakened the group. In August 1967, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) identified the Panthers as a major target of its counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO). COINTELPRO was designed to prevent "a coalition of militant Black nationalist groups" and the emergence of a "Black messiah" "who might unify and electrify these violence-prone elements." When Black Panther leaders recruited Carmichael to join their ranks, the FBI used anonymous letters and phone calls to disrupt plans for an alliance between the Panthers and SNCC.

Assaults by local police also contributed to the decline of black militancy. On October 28, 1967, Oakland police arrested Huey Newton on murder charges after a dispute with Oakland police that resulted in the death of one policeman and the wounding of another. In September, 1968, Newton was convicted of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to 2-15 years in prison. The following December, two Chicago leaders of the party, Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, were killed in a police raid. By the end of the decade, more than 20 Panthers had been killed. Many other Panthers elsewhere were facing long prison terms as a result of intense repression. By the late 1960s, the Black Panther Party was no longer an effective organization.

THE LEGACY OF THE MODERN BLACK STRUGGLE

The repression of the Panthers signaled the end of the "Second Reconstruction" and an era of mass protest and militancy. Many of the institutions created during the era remained in existence after the 1970s, but they functioned mainly to consolidate and protect earlier gains rather than to bring about new social reforms, such as King had envisioned at the end of his life. The number of blacks elected to political office increased dramatically during the 1970s and 1980s, but, without the leverage of a mass protest movement, they could not resist the overall trend toward conservatism. The black middle-class also increased considerably in size, as black college graduates took advantage of new employment opportunities. These economic gains were not shared by all segments of the black populace, however, and conditions of life for blacks in many cities deteriorated as a result of declining public school systems and urban infrastructures.

The most significant legislation to result from the mass struggles of the 1960s were the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. (Congress passed notable civil rights bills in 1968, 1972, and 1990.) Taken together, these laws greatly enhanced the civic status of blacks, women, and other groups and placed greater responsibility on the federal government to protect such groups from discriminatory treatment. Nevertheless, civil rights laws did not eliminate poverty or racial segregation. In 1968, the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (the Kerner Commission) concluded that, despite civil right reforms, the nation was "moving toward two societies, one black, one white — separate and unequal." By the time of this report, the interracial coalition that had supported passage of the major civil rights legislation was divided over what role, if any, government should play in eliminating these persistent racial inequities. A white "backlash" against black militancy and white resentment of black advances reduced support for civil rights and prevented passage of significant new civil rights legislation during the 1970s and 1980s.

Although militant protest activity declined after the 1960s, civil rights movements have remained a significant feature of American political life. Increased participation in the American political system has lessened black reliance on mass action, but protest remains a major aspect of African-American politics, particularly when previous civil rights gains appeared to be threatened. Furthermore, women, homosexuals, disabled people, and other groups suffering discriminatory treatment have mobilized civil rights movements and organizations of their own. During the 1970s and 1980s, controversies continued over the appropriateness of employment affirmative action programs and court-ordered compensatory remedies for historically-rooted patterns of discrimination. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the conservative political climate of the period, most national civil rights policies established during America's second Reconstruction have survived. Moreover, civil rights advocates have continued to press, with limited success, toward implementation of policies seeking group advancement rather than simply individual rights, tangible gains rather than civil status, and equality of social outcomes rather than equality of opportunity. The modern African-American freedom struggles of the 1960s produced major, though still controversial, changes in the United States.

Bibliography

Branch, Taylor. *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years,* 1954-1963. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988.

Burner, Eric. *And Gently He Shall Lead Them: Robert Pariss Moses and Mississippi SNCC.* New York: New York University Press, 1993.

Carson, Clayborne. *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Chafe, William H. *Civilities and Civil Rights; Greensboro, North Carolina and the Black Struggle for Freedom.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

Fairclough, Adam. *To Redeem the Soul of America: The Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King, Jr.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1978.

Garrow, David J. *Protest at Selma: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.

Garrow, David J. *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.* New York: William Morrow, 1987.

Lawson, Steven F. Black Ballots: *Voting Rights in the South, 1944-1969.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1976.

Lewis, David Levering. *King: A Biography.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978.

Meier, August, and Elliott Rudwick. *CORE: A Study in the Civil Rights Movement, 1942-1986.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Marable, Manning. *Race, Reform and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction in Black America from 1945 to 1982.* Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1984.

Raines, Howell, ed. *When My Soul is Rested: Movement Days in the Deep South Remembered.* (New York: Penguin Books, 1983.

Sitkoff, Harvard. *The Struggle for Black Equality, 1954-1980.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1981.

Weisbrot, Robert. *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement.* New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1990.

Williams, Juan. *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. New York: Viking Press, 1987.

Wolff, Miles. *Lunch at the Five and Ten: The Greensboro Sit-ins: A Contemporary History.* New York: Stein and Day, 1970.